

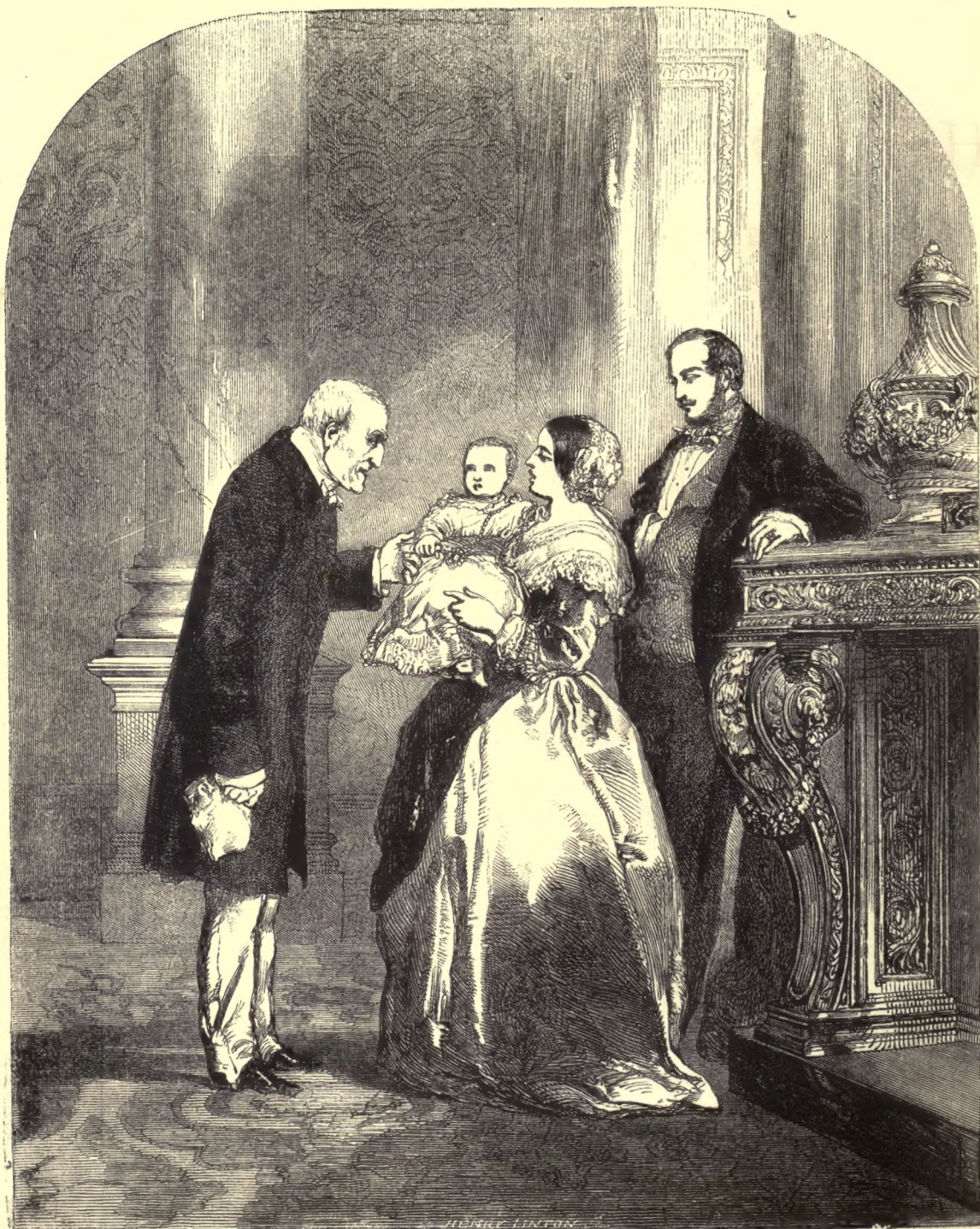
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THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

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CASSELL'S

ILLUSTRATED

HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE DEATH OF GEORGE III. TO THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.

(1820—1861.)



VOL. III.

(BEING THE SEVENTH VOLUME OF THE ENTIRE HISTORY.)

FROM THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE IV. TO THE IRISH FAMINE, 1847.

With numerous Engravings.

CASSELL, PETTER, AND GALPIN,

LA BELLE SAUVAGE YARD, LUDGATE HILL, E.C.

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P R E F A C E.



WE now present to the Public the Third Volume of the New Series of our HISTORY OF ENGLAND, forming the Seventh of the entire Work.

It comprises a period of twenty-seven years, from the Accession of George the Fourth, in 1820, to the Irish Famine in 1847.

The events of these years, though they are of course fresh in the memory of the older men amongst us, yet seem to us to require a clear and precise narrative, even more than those of two or three hundred years ago. The information respecting them has not as yet been gathered into continuous historical records, which can be easily consulted. It lies scattered through newspapers, pamphlets, biographies, and diaries; in fact, many of the events are of a character which rendered it impossible to recount them fairly at the time when they took place, or even for many years afterwards. Party prejudice on one side or the other warped the judgment and falsified the records. For instance, what contemporary could have written a fair account of the Divorce of Queen Caroline, or of the Reform Bill? It has been our business to consult every source of information within our reach, and to give a narrative which will, we hope, be found as impartial as we have tried to make it. In recounting great struggles like that for the Repeal of the Corn Laws, we have tried to realise the position of each of the contending parties, and to give each of them full credit for sincerity and truth. Above all, we have striven, in going over these old battle-fields of class against class, to say not one word that might serve to re-kindle the old animosities, or give new life to scandals that are now happily passing into oblivion.

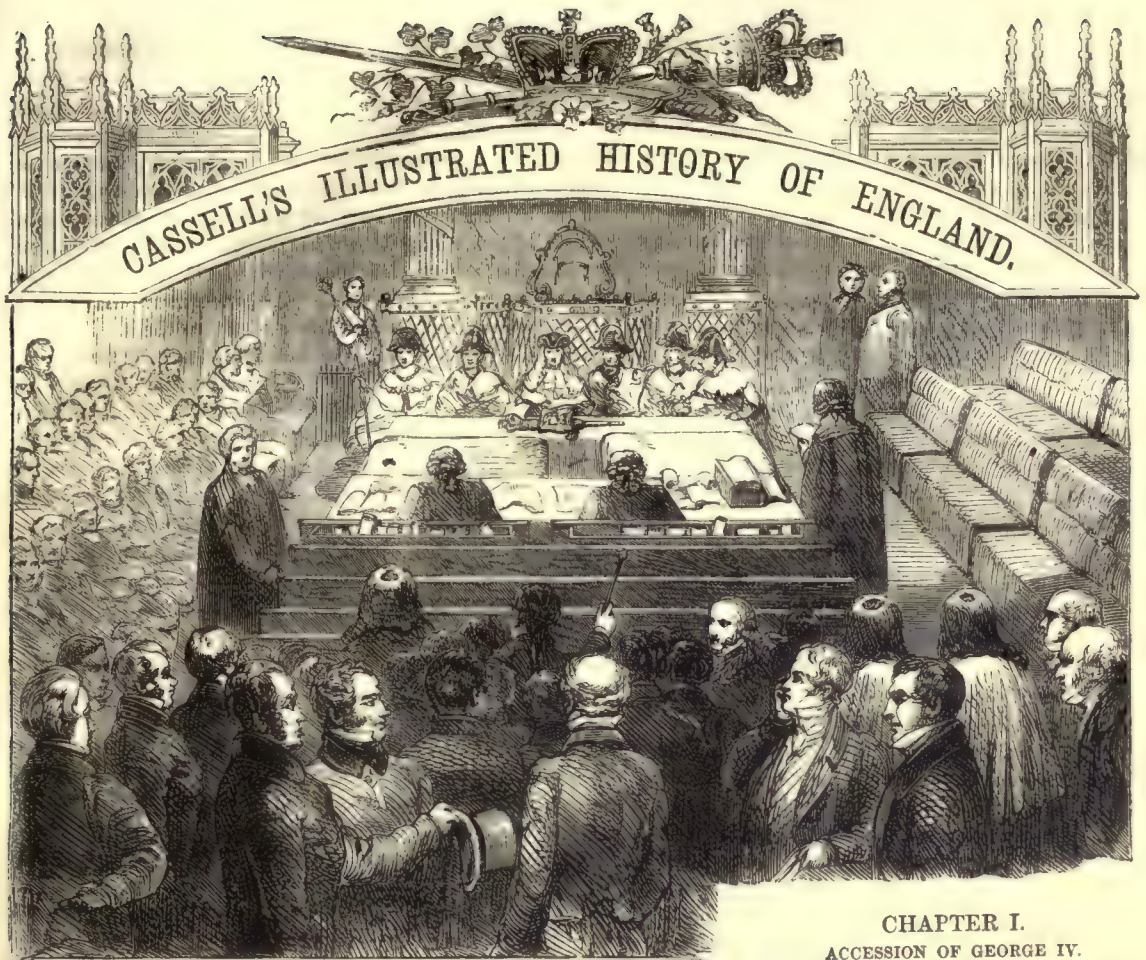
The next Volume we shall commence with an account of the "Year of Revolutions," 1848—particularly recording the Chartist demonstration in this country. We shall go carefully over the History of Italy during that stormy period of her annals which ended with the fatal day of Novara, to serve as a preface to the detailed narrative we purpose giving of the French Campaign in Lombardy in 1859, and the brilliant achievements of Garibaldi in Naples and Sicily in the following year. The Crimean War will receive full attention at our hands: we shall recount the negotiations that preceded it, and endeavour, as far as the nature of the case permits, to relate the events connected with it in the same spirit of dispassionate inquiry after the truth as dictated our researches on the subjects alluded to above.

It is almost needless to say that, while we recount these events at length, we shall leave space for a full narrative of the Indian Mutiny—a struggle without parallel in our annals, whether we regard its horrors or the heroism displayed by the handful of Europeans who were suddenly attacked, and had to hold their own against fearful odds, with but little prospect of relief.

Our Wood Engravings will illustrate all the most stirring scenes of this stormy period of revolution and warfare, and embrace Portraits of the Sovereigns, Statesmen, and Generals who took part in them.

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PASSING THE REFORM BILL.



CHAPTER I.

ACCESSION OF GEORGE IV.

The Cato Street Conspiracy—Disturbances in the North—The New Parliament—Death of Grattan—Henry Grattan on National Education.

THE reign of George IV. commences an era of social revolution in England, which has continued its silent working ever since with an influence constantly deepening and expanding, affecting the destinies of the world throughout all time. Never did society make such rapid progress as during the period on which we are now entering. It has been impelled forward from various directions by mighty, simultaneous movements, for the most part as quiet in their action as they have been irresistible in their force. The great fundamental principles of government have been debated earnestly in the presence of the people, till the cause of freedom and of right has been triumphantly established by the suffrages of the nation. Religious equality, so far as it is consistent with the principles of the established church, which is still maintained as an element in the best and most successful constitution in the world, has become a fixed and essential principle of our national policy. Dissenters have been released from their galling

disabilities, and have obtained equal political and civil rights with the rest of the community. Catholic emancipation has been removed from the majority of the Irish people every remnant of the penal code, and placed them on the same footing with their protestant fellow-countrymen. The representation of the people in the imperial parliament has been reformed, after a protracted and violent struggle, verging upon revolution, and if our representative system does not yet fully answer the design of the constitution, and give complete effect to the enlightened popular will in the legislation and government of the country, principles have been admitted and measures adopted which guarantee that this consummation is only the work of time. The science of political economy—the ignorance of which in our legislators caused so much privation and suffering among the masses of the people, debarring them from the enjoyment of the blessings which the beneficent Author of our being has so bountifully provided for the human family—is now perfectly understood, and its main principles, so long vehemently resisted, and so fiercely resisted as ruinous to all the interests of the country, are now admitted by every educated man as indisputable maxims of sound policy. The cause of popular education, which may be said to have come into existence within this period, has made extraordinary progress, dissipating the anti-social prejudice that the diffusion of knowledge among the masses of the people is dangerous to the commonwealth. Science, in its highest branches, and in its practical application, has been cultivated to an extent and with a success unprecedented in past ages, and has contributed to the vast and boundless development of national industry and wealth; effecting marvellous rapidity of locomotion and international communication; multiplying the resources of commerce in a constantly increasing ratio; breaking down the barriers to human progress in every country; carrying the benign influences of Christian civilisation into the most ancient of heathen empires, and the most alien of barbarous races; leading to the hope that at no very distant day the expectations of the philanthropist will be realised in the diffusion of general happiness throughout the whole human family, by the prevalence of knowledge, freedom, just government, and pure religion.

It is manifest, then, that the history of England—the centre of all those mighty civilising influences during the era commencing with the reign of George IV., when the nation, having been released from the toil and strain of war, and having secured its independence, devoted itself with alacrity and energy to the works of peace—must be fraught with the deepest interest, and the most valuable instruction to the masses of the people. To secure both these objects to the utmost of our ability is the task which we have set before us in the following pages.

George III. expired on the 29th of January, 1820. Although it was Sunday, both houses of parliament met according to the requisition of the statute, 6 Anne c. 7. Lord Eldon merely appeared on the woolsack; and, as soon as prayers were read, the house of peers was adjourned. The same day a council was held at Carlton House, when the usual ceremonies were observed, as upon the commence-

ment of a new reign, although George IV. had been virtually king during the period of the regency. On this occasion the ministers delivered up the emblems of their different offices, and were all graciously re-appointed. Lord Eldon, in a letter to his daughter, congratulates himself on having been thus placed "in the very singular situation, that of a third chancellorship." But lord Campbell remarks that he was probably not aware that one of his predecessors had been chancellor five times. His immediate successor had been four times chancellor, and lord Cottenham three times.* "It is amusing," says lord Campbell, "to observe how he enhances the delight he felt at the commencement of this third chancellorship by protestations that he was reluctantly induced again to accept the worthless bauble, lest, by declining it, he should be chargeable with ingratitude." The chancellor made similar protestations of reluctance and humility when George IV., grateful for his services in connection with the prosecution of the queen, pressed upon him accumulated honours; giving him, at the same time, two additional steps in the peerage, as viscount Encomb and earl of Eldon—honours which, he said, he had repeatedly declined to accept when offered by George III.

Parliament again met for a few days, but only to vote addresses of condolence and congratulation, as a dissolution had been determined on. The marquis of Lansdowne pointed out that there was not the usual reason for a dissolution which occurred upon a demise of the crown; but lord Eldon explained that, at common law, the parliament died with the sovereign in whose name it was called; and although, by the statute of William III., it could sit six months longer, it was liable to be dissolved sooner; and constitutionally, it ought to be dissolved as soon as public business would allow; so that noble lords who started any business to delay the dissolution would be obstructing the due exercise of the royal prerogative. He, as lord commissioner, therefore, concluded the session by delivering the royal speech, which deplored the loss of a sovereign, "the common father of all his people, and praised the prudence and firmness with which the lords and commons had counteracted the designs of the disaffected." It concluded with the following words:—"If any doubt had remained as to the nature of those principles by which the peace and happiness of the nation were so seriously menaced, or of the excesses to which they were likely to lead, the flagrant and sanguinary conspiracy which has lately been detected must open the eyes of the most incredulous, and must vindicate to the whole world the justice and expediency of those measures to which you judged it necessary to resort in defence of the laws and constitution of the kingdom." The conspiracy referred to has been called the "Cato Street Conspiracy," justly pronounced one of the most diabolical, and, at the same time, the most preposterous plot recorded in our annals. But nothing could be more unfair or more sophistical than the use made of it in the royal speech. The speech was delivered on the 28th of February, and the conspiracy was detected on the 23rd. The public mind was then filled

* *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, vol. vii., p. 356.

with horror at the atrocity of its design, and the ministers tried to make the nation see in this enormous crime a justification of the policy of repression by which it was sought to counteract the effects of their own despotic proceedings, which had driven it to the verge of insurrection. At the same time, they endeavoured to cover the liberal cause with the odium attaching to a sanguinary plot, concocted by a few crazy fanatics, instigated by a man who afterwards betrayed them. The facts of this conspiracy were narrated in the last volume of this history, but as that volume may not be in the hands of all the readers of these pages, a brief *résumé* of the case, in this place, may not be unacceptable. The principal conspirators were one Thistlewood, who had been a subaltern officer in the army, and had been previously tried for a similar crime; Ings, a butcher; Tidd and Brunt, shoemakers; and Davidson, a man of colour. The first design was to assassinate the king. This was soon abandoned, and it was resolved to murder all his majesty's ministers, each in his own house, for which forty men were to be told off; and if any of them faltered in his mission, his own life was to be forfeited. Two guns stationed in Gray's Inn and six in the Artillery Ground were to be seized, with which the Mansion House and the Bank were to be attacked; London being, at the same time, set on fire in several places. The design was afterwards modified when Thistlewood learned that the whole cabinet were to dine at lord Harrowby's, in Grosvenor Square. He said to his fellow-conspirators, "As there has not been a dinner for so long, there will no doubt be fourteen or sixteen there. It will be a rare haul to murder them all together!"

A room was taken above a stable in Cato Street, where the conspirators assembled on the afternoon of the day appointed for the cabinet dinner. This room could be entered only by a ladder, which led up to a trap-door. Everything was in readiness: arms and ammunition, fire-balls, to ignite a straw depôt in the cavalry barracks, King Street, and a proclamation to be issued next day, announcing the new government. At six o'clock in the evening Thistlewood and twenty-four of his companions were arming themselves in the hay-loft by the light of two small candles. One of the party was to present a note for one of the ministers, while they were at dinner at lord Harrowby's. On the door being opened, all were to rush into the dining-room, and execute the bloody work, bringing forth, as proofs of their success and trophies, the heads of lords Sidmouth and Castlereagh.

Meanwhile the government had been informed, through Edwards, an accomplice, of all that was going on. Orders were given that the preparations for the dinner should go forward, as if nothing was known—the members of the cabinet having arranged to dine privately in Downing Street. When the hour arrived, a party of fourteen policemen proceeded to Cato Street. The first who ascended the trap-door was an officer named Smithers. He called upon the conspirators to surrender. They refused, when he rushed forward to seize Thistlewood, by whom he was run through the body, and he immediately fell. The lights were instantly extinguished, and a terrific

struggle took place in the dark. Some flung themselves down through the trap-door; others got out through a window. At the critical moment a body of the foot-guards arrived, and arrested several of those who were trying to escape. Nine were taken prisoners; the rest, in the darkness and confusion, got off. Among these was Thistlewood, for whose apprehension a reward of one thousand pounds was offered, and he was taken prisoner next morning in his bed. Thistlewood, Ings, Tidd, Brunt, and Davidson were convicted of high treason, and were executed on the 1st of May: first hanged and then decapitated. The latter bloody process, a relic of barbarous ages, greatly horrified the immense concourse of spectators, through which ran a shuddering sensation like an electric shock. Five of the others were sentenced to transportation for life; and one received a free pardon. All the efforts that could be made to induce them to repent were vain. "In ten minutes," said Ings, as he ascended the scaffold, "we shall know the great secret." They all behaved with the greatest firmness, defending their conduct as not only justifiable, but meritorious and patriotic. Thistlewood, who was an educated man, made a speech before the passing of his sentence, in which he said that high treason had been committed against the people at Manchester, who were indiscriminately massacred, and justice was closed against the mutilated and the maimed; that "the prince, by the advice of his ministers, thanked the murderers, still reeking in the gore of their victims. Insurrection then became a public duty, and the blood of the victims should have been the watchword for vengeance on their murderers."

Lord Campbell, in his "Life of Eldon," observes, "I do not think that ministers deserved any censure for the manner in which they conducted themselves in this affair, unless that they somewhat unscrupulously yielded to the temptation of arguing that the plot was a justification of their recent coercive laws, and of pretending to infer from this insane scheme that there was a revolutionary spirit generally prevailing in the country." The attempt to justify those laws by such an event was indeed absurd. If they had been effective, they would have prevented the plot. It might be more reasonably argued that it was the severity of those laws, and the harshness with which they were executed, that drove ignorant and weak-minded men to desperation. At any rate, just indignation was excited against the government for making a speech from the throne the instrument of fixing so foul a stigma upon the character of the mass of the English people, groaning under oppression, associating them with a band of assassins with which they had no connection, and with which, but for the iniquitous proceedings of the government, they would have had no sympathy.

Lord Eldon thus referred to his escape in a letter to a lady of his family:—"For the past, thankfulness and gratitude, I trust, will relieve all other feelings. As to the future, I trust there is something to be hoped for of protection in human caution, and that we may all fully depend upon that Providence to which we are so largely indebted." The ministers whose lives had been saved by the frustration of this plot returned thanks publicly in St. Paul's, a few days after.

Notwithstanding the vigilance of the executive, and its sternly repressive policy, dangerous agitation had prevailed during the winter in the West Riding of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Durham, and Glasgow. Nothing less than a general insurrection was contemplated. It was postponed from time to time, and at length fixed to take place on the 2nd of April. A large military force, however, stationed in the disturbed districts, prevented any serious outbreak in the north of England: in Scotland the danger appeared greater. On Sunday morning, the 2nd of April, a treasonable proclamation was found posted over all the streets of Glasgow, Paisley, and Stirling, and the neighbouring towns. There was no name to the proclamation, nor did any one know the source from which it emanated. It purported to come from a provisional government, calling on the people to cease working, close their shops, and prepare for a revolution. The army were invoked to imitate the glorious example of the Spanish troops. No royal proclamation was ever more implicitly obeyed. Work everywhere ceased; the factories were deserted; the sounds of industry were hushed in the busiest districts; the streets were thronged with people, watching with intense interest for the march of revolution from the south. Manifestly, the excited masses only wanted a military leader and arms to enrol themselves under the standard of revolution. But Scotland was equal to the emergency. The yeomanry and the volunteer corps, which had been recently formed, came forward for the defence of the throne and the constitution with the greatest promptitude and alacrity. In a few days an army of five thousand men, including two thousand horse, were assembled in Glasgow. This great demonstration of volunteer strength extinguished the hopes of the insurgents. The expected movement in England did not take place: the appointed signal of stopping the London mail was looked for in vain. Thus confronted and discouraged, the leaders of the movement abandoned their enterprise in despair, the people gradually resumed their avocations, and this outbreak, which at first had appeared so threatening, was exterminated with a sacrifice of only two men executed at Stirling, one at Glasgow, and seven or eight transported. "But," says Sir Archibald Alison, "the rebellious spirit of the manufacturing districts was suppressed in a far more effectual and better way, which neither caused blood to flow nor a tear to fall. They were morally slaughtered; the strength of their opponents and their own weakness were evinced in an unmistakeable manner. The ancient spirit and loyalty of the Scotch was shown in the most striking manner on this occasion: the flower of the youth in all the counties ranged themselves in arms around the standard of their country; and Sir Walter Scott, whose chivalrous spirit was strongly roused by these exciting events, boasted in the pride of his heart, at a public dinner of eight hundred gentlemen in Edinburgh, presided over by the marquis of Huntley, that there were gentlemen enough assembled to have raised fifty thousand men in arms." Sir Archibald adds, "that the Edinburgh squadron at that time, which was the successor of that in which Sir Walter Scott had served and has immortalised, contained several young men destined to distin-

guished eminence; among others, the present lord justice clerk, Hope, Mr. Patrick Tytler, the historian of Scotland, Mr. Lockhart, since editor of the 'Quarterly Review,' and Mr. Francis Grant, since so eminent as a painter, in London."

The general election was, on the whole, favourable to the government; the forces of conservatism being roused into activity by the violent democratic tendencies of the times, and by the threats of revolution. The new parliament met on the 21st of April. Mr. Manners Sutton was re-elected speaker. A week was occupied in swearing in the members, and the session was opened on the 27th by a speech from the king, the vagueness of which gave no ground for an amendment to the address in either house.

In the old roll of members one illustrious name was found, borne by a statesman who was never more to take his seat in the house. Henry Grattan expired soon after the session commenced. Sir James Macintosh, in moving a new writ for Dublin, which he had represented for many years, observed "that he was, perhaps, the only man recorded in history who had obtained equal fame and influence in two assemblies differing from each other in such essential respects as the English and Irish parliaments." Thirty years before, in the Irish house of commons, his eloquence awed the government and thrilled the nation. It was impassioned and brilliant, yet in the highest degree logical and elaborate, even when he spoke without preparation, and had to reply, on the spur of the moment, to attacks made upon him from the ministerial benches. As a champion of the parliamentary independence of his country, he was intensely earnest; and his speeches had a wonderful effect in rousing the spirit which produced an army of volunteers in 1782, so numerous and so formidable that the government were compelled to yield to the national demand; and the grateful parliament voted him a large sum of money for the purchase of an estate. His success, however, followed by the organisation of the United Irishmen, and the rebellion of 1798, caused the British government to resolve upon the abolition of the Irish parliament, as the only effectual security against separation. Grattan resisted the measure with all his energy; and, though prostrated with illness, he was carried into the house to make his last speech against the union. It was apprehended by his friends that as a statesman he would shine with greatly diminished lustre in the British house of commons, to whose more frigid atmosphere it was supposed his style of eloquence was not adapted. But it had a solid foundation of good sense. It was powerfully argumentative, as well as fluent and fervid—"logic on fire;" and he had, besides, an austere dignity of character that commanded the respect of the British senate. He could not, however, have been expected to carry with him to Westminster the same buoyancy of spirit that distinguished him in the native parliament of which he was the chief ornament, whose short-lived independence he had achieved, and concerning which he said, beautifully and sadly, "I have sat by its cradle, I have followed its hearse."

Lord Campbell remarks that the session promised for some weeks to be very dull; no subjects more stirring being brought forward or announced than the settlement

of the civil list, the discharge of insolvent debtors, the suppression of Sunday newspapers, and the reading of the Athanasian Creed. To one of those subjects, the civil list, Lord Eldon thus jocosely alluded in a letter to his daughter:—"Our royal master seems to have got into temper again, as far as I could judge from his conversation with me this morning. He has been pretty well disposed to part with us all, because we would not make additions to his revenue. This we thought conscientiously we could not do in the present state of the country, and of the distresses of the middle and lower orders of the people. To which we might add, too, that of the higher orders."

But there was one subject of general and permanent interest brought under the notice of the house of commons. Mr. Henry Brougham made an important speech on the great and difficult subject of popular education, which he has continued to advocate, with so much power and success, throughout the whole of his lengthened and brilliant career. He stated that there were then twelve thousand parishes, or chapelries in England; of these three thousand five hundred had not a vestige of a school, and the people had no more means of education than the Hottentots or Kaffirs. Of the remainder, there were five thousand five hundred unendowed, depending entirely on the casual and fleeting support of the parents of the children attending them. The number of children receiving education at all the schools, week-day and Sunday, was seven hundred thousand. Estimating the number educated at home at fifty thousand, the whole number then under instruction would be seven hundred and fifty thousand—about one-seventeenth of the entire population. In Scotland, the proportion at that time was about one-tenth; in Holland and Prussia, the same; in Switzerland, one-eighth. France was then at the bottom of the scale; only one-twenty-eighth of the population being under instruction. Mr. Brougham proposed a school-rate for England, according to the American plan. But then started up the difficulty, which has continued to perplex statesmen ever since, and seems almost as far from solution as ever. Popular education in England must be based upon religion; but this is a subject upon which the religious bodies cannot be brought to agree. The church of England must have her catechism and formularies; the dissenters must be at liberty to teach religion in their own way; the Roman catholics will agree with neither; and so it is impossible to get them to concur in any general plan of national education. Great progress, however, has been made in the work of popular education since the subject was taken up by lord Brougham, more than forty years ago; a fact which we shall have ample opportunities of illustrating as we proceed in this history.

CHAPTER II.

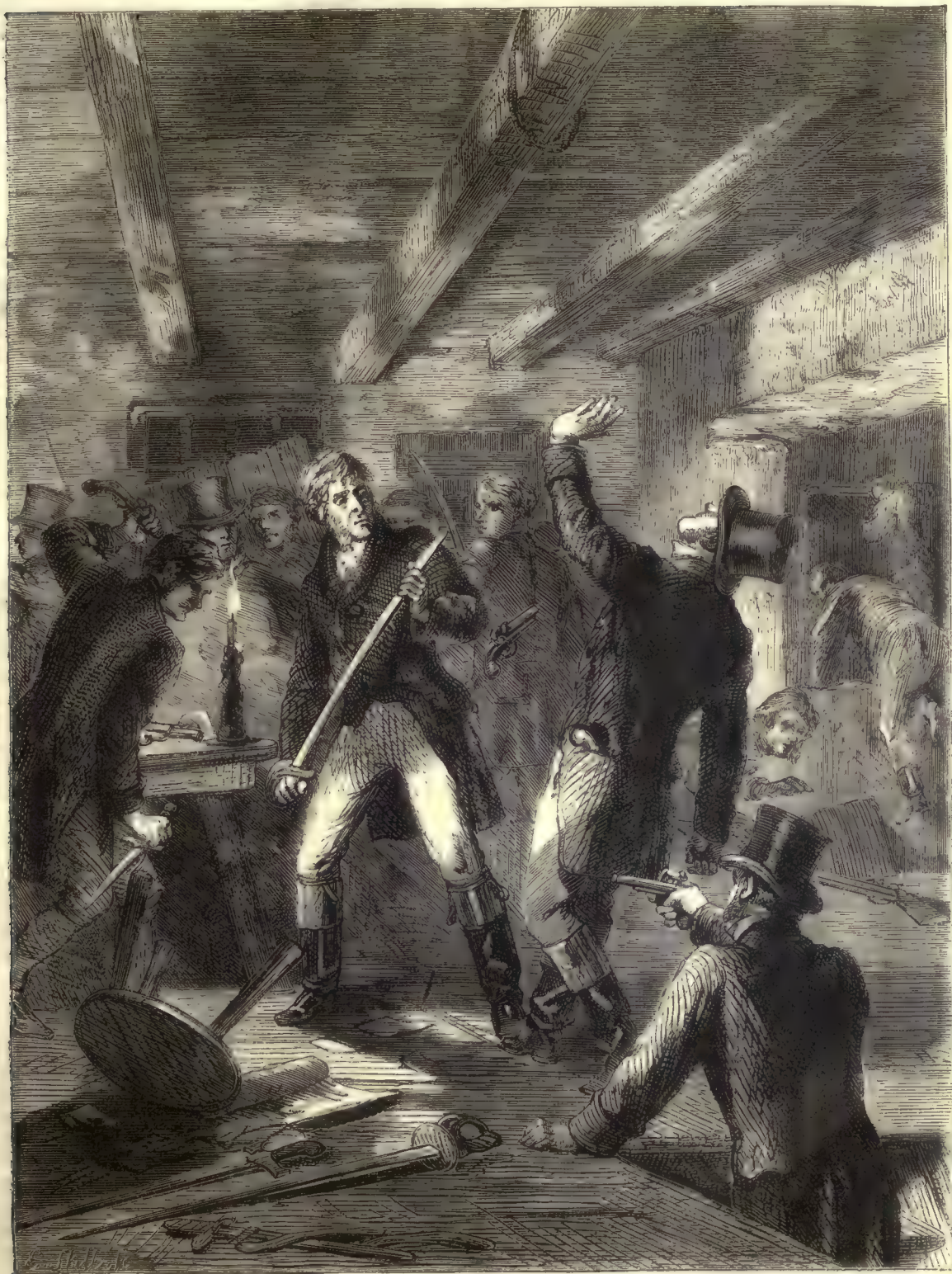
The Queen's Name struck out of the Liturgy—She returns to England—Her Reception by the People—Intense Public Excitement—Civil War imminent—Various Attempts at Negotiation fail—All hope of Adjustment abandoned.

THE indisposition of parliament to attend to the ordinary business of the legislature, however important and pressing

any portion of it might be considered under other circumstances, may be easily accounted for. One subject engrossed the minds of all men at this time, and agitated the nation to a depth and extent altogether unprecedented in our history. The house of lords were about to become actors in a drama, among the most exciting and tragic ever performed on the stage of real life in any civilised country. With the reign of a virtuous queen interposed between us and the period now under review, and with the altered manners and improved morals of high life, resulting from this and other causes, it is difficult for us to realise the scenes we are about to depict, or to believe that such things were possible in a Christian country, and in the metropolis of the most enlightened and powerful nation in the world. The story of Caroline of Brunswick is one of the saddest and most romantic in the annals of the queens of England. The time has now arrived when it can be fully told with all its accompanying incidents—when we can not only relate what was known to the public out of doors, but what was said and done by the principal actors behind the scenes—which have since been published in memoirs and private letters—the internal life of royalty, as well as its studied and stately manifestations which met the gaze of contemporaries. It will be found, in the course of this narrative, that, in the reign of George IV. monarchy in England passed through a crisis which was very near proving fatal, and that its having survived the ordeal was little short of a miracle. When the prince regent became king, his wife, as a matter of course, became the rightful queen of England. But her husband had resolved that she should not be queen; and, rather than not have his way in this, he was ready to peril his throne. She was as fully entitled to enjoy the well-defined rank and position that devolved upon her by the laws of the country, as he was to wear his crown, without regard to personal character. He would break the marriage tie, if he could, and be free to take another wife; but, failing that, he was determined to degrade the queen by bringing against her the foulest charges of immorality. She might, indeed, have escaped a trial on those charges if she had consented to remain abroad, and had agreed to forego any title that would have connected her with the royal family of England. Till the death of George III., who had always been her steady friend, she had been prayed for in the liturgy as the princess of Wales. There was now no princess of Wales, and the king insisted that she should not be prayed for at all. His ministers, against their own convictions—against what they well knew to be the almost unanimous feeling of the nation—weakly yielded to the arbitrary will of their licentious sovereign. They and their apologists attempted to defend this conduct, by alleging that she was prayed for under the words, "the rest of the royal family." But Mr. Denman, her solicitor-general, afterwards observed, with more truth, that the general prayer in which she was embraced was, "For all that are desolate and oppressed." The moment the news of this outrage reached the queen, she resolved, with characteristic spirit and determination, to come at once to England, and assert her rights in person. The ministers flattered themselves that this was



GEORGE IV. FROM A PAINTING BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.



THE ARREST OF THE CATO STREET CONSPIRATORS.

a vain boast, and that, conscious of guilt, her courage would fail her. "Our queen," wrote lord Eldon to his daughter, "threatens to approach to England. But if she can venture, she is the most courageous lady I ever heard of. The mischief, if she does come, will be infinite. At first she will have extensive popularity with the multitude; in a few short months or weeks she will be ruined in the opinion of the world."

On a subsequent day he again wrote:—"I saw my royal master as usual yesterday. The committee to settle the forms of the coronation have reported to him that, as there is to be no crowning of a queen, peeresses should not be summoned to attend, and so all former precedents in like cases appear to have been. But he says that as queen Elizabeth, though a lady, had both peers and peeresses, so he, though he has no queen, will have both ladies and gentlemen to attend him. I think, however, he will not persist in this. The town is employed in nothing but speculation, whether her majesty will or will not come. Great bets are laid about it. Some people have taken fifty guineas, undertaking in lieu of them to pay a guinea a-day till she comes, so sure are they that she will not come. Others assert that they know she will come, and that she will find her way into Westminster Abbey and Westminster Hall on the coronation, in spite of all opposition. I retain my old opinion that she will not come, *unless she is insane*. It is, however, certain that she has appointed maids of honour—ladies to whom she is pleased to give that appellation."

The other ministers shared this confidence, and the king himself seemed to have no misgivings upon the subject. On the 3rd of May he received addresses at Carlton House, and on the 10th he held his first levée since his accession to the throne, at which nearly eighteen hundred persons of distinction were present, who testified their attachment to his person in the most gratifying manner. The families of the great political party that formed and supported his government affected to treat the queen's pretensions with a quiet disdain that evinced their confidence in the unbounded loyalty of the nation. But their eyes were soon opened; and in a few weeks ministers sat abashed upon the Treasury benches as if conscious that they were driving the vessel of the constitution upon a rock, subservient to the tyranny of their master. The liberal party were vehement in their denunciations, and the leading whigs, whether from policy or a sense of duty, came forward as the champions of the queen's rights. The people were all enthusiastic in her favour, and wild with excitement.

On the 1st of June her majesty arrived at St. Omer, intending to embark at Calais without delay for England. She wrote thence to the prime minister, the earl of Liverpool, commanding him to prepare a palace in London for her reception; another to lord Melville, to send a yacht to carry her across the Channel to Dover; and a third to the duke of York, repeating both demands, and complaining of the treatment she had received. Two days later lord Hutchinson, with Mr. Brougham, who was her legal adviser, arrived with a proposition from the king, offering her fifty thousand pounds a-year for life if she would

remain on the continent, and relinquish her claims as queen of England. There was some unaccountable misunderstanding between Mr. Brougham and lord Hutchinson, which has never been explained. The following statement is said to have been placed in the hands of the former by lord Liverpool:—"The king is willing to recommend to parliament to enable his majesty to settle an annuity of fifty thousand pounds a-year upon the queen, to be enjoyed by her during her natural life, and in lieu of any claim in the nature of jointure or otherwise, provided she will engage not to come into any part of the British dominions, and provided she engages to take some other name or title than that of queen, and not to exercise any of the rights or privileges of queen, other than with respect to the appointment of law officers, or to any proceedings in courts of justice. The annuity to cease upon the violation of these engagements, viz., upon her coming into any part of the British dominions; or her assuming the title of queen; or her exercising any of the rights or privileges of queen, other than above excepted, after the annuity shall have been settled upon her."

Mr. Brougham, instead of submitting this proposition to the queen, stated to her that he came accompanied by lord Hutchinson, as mediator who had a proposal to make on the part of the king. The queen demanded that it should be put in writing; but he answered, that he had only memoranda upon separate scraps of paper, the substance of many conversations held with lord Liverpool; and he conveyed to her an extract of a letter from lord Liverpool, in which he said, "It is material that her majesty should know confidentially, that if she be so ill-advised as to come over to this country, there must be an end to all negotiation and compromise. The decision, I may say, is taken to proceed against her as soon as she sets her foot on the British shore." The proposition made by lord Hutchinson was substantially the same as that in the statement above given. The queen instantly and indignantly rejected the offer, and started for England with all haste, having dismissed her foreign suite, including Bergami, her chamberlain, and the prime cause of the scandal that attached to her name. She would not even be dissuaded by Mr. Brougham, who most earnestly implored her to refrain from rushing into certain trouble, and possible danger; or, at least, to delay taking the step until lord Hutchinson should have received fresh instructions.

She was peremptory, and sailed at once for Dover, accompanied by lady Anne Hamilton and alderman Wood, landing on the 6th of June. As this event was quite unexpected by government, the commandant, having had no orders to the contrary, received her with a royal salute. The beach was covered with people, who welcomed her with shouts of enthusiasm. From Dover to London her journey was a continued ovation. In London the whole population seemed to turn out in a delirium of joy and triumph, which reached its climax as the procession passed Carlton House. No residence having been provided for her by the government, she proceeded to the house of alderman Wood, in Audley Street.

The astounded ministers held protracted and most

anxious cabinet councils, at their wits' end to know how to act under this emergency; the swelling tide of the king's unpopularity threatening to sweep away him and them, and even the throne itself. The result of their deliberations was the following message from his majesty to the house of lords:—

“GEORGE R.—The king thinks it necessary, in consequence of the arrival of the queen, to communicate to the house of lords certain papers respecting the conduct of her majesty since her departure from this kingdom, which he recommends to the immediate and serious attention of this house.

“The king has felt the most anxious desire to avert the necessity of disclosures and discussions which must be as painful to his people as they can be to himself; but the step now taken by the queen leaves him no alternative.

“The king has the fullest confidence that, in consequence of this communication, the house of lords will adopt that course of proceeding which the justice of the case, and the honour and dignity of his majesty's crown, may require.

“GEORGE R.”

Lord Eldon, writing to his daughter, Mrs. Bankes, gives the following account of these events:—

“June 7th, 1820, half-past 9 A.M.

“Contrary to all expectation, the queen entered London yesterday in an open carriage, with the alderman and lady Anne Hamilton, and amidst a vast concourse of people, in carriages and on horseback, who had gone out to meet her, and to hail her approach. She drove to alderman Wood's house in South Audley Street, where she exhibited herself and the alderman from the balcony to all who chose to take a peep at them, the multitude in the street requiring all who passed by to make their reverences and obeisances to her majesty. In the meantime, messages were sent to both houses of parliament, which may be considered as the forerunners of long parliamentary proceedings relative to her conduct. These parliamentary proceedings are likely to be warm on both sides. At present one can only conjecture what is to happen—and conjecture deserves little confidence, when this lady's arrival has robbed conjecture of all merit. As yet, indeed, there has been no time to consider what the effect of it should be upon coronation, drawing-rooms, &c. I think confidently it must postpone the coronation; and it will require some days to see what can or cannot be done with the other matters. The king was well received as he went to and from the house; but his reception was nothing like what they gave the queen.”

“From this time,” says the duke of Buckingham, “the agitation in the public mind hourly increased, till it began to assume a most threatening aspect. The queen never appeared in public without creating intense excitement. When in the streets her horses were taken from her carriage, and she was drawn in triumph by scores of shouting adherents through a clamorous mob. Before the alderman's house, in South Audley Street, stood, hour after hour, a shouting myriad, excited to a pitch of frenzy to which no description can do justice, by the

appearance on the balcony of a stout lady, in a large hat, surmounted by a plume of feathers.”*

Some extracts from the correspondence in the volume just quoted will give an idea of the state of feeling among the aristocracy on this occasion. The hon. colonel Stanhope writes:—“I am in a great fright about the queen. What could make the government employ lord H., who seems to have committed himself and employers most lamentably? She will, I fear, have a tremendous party of many well-disposed, good, moral men, as well as of all those who hate the king and the government.”

A contemporary diarist observes:—“Had some conversation with Tierney, who looked serious and down. He said everything was worse and worse out of doors, and he had no remedy. I observed, ‘The only remedy—the only possibility of things returning to their former state—was a rebellion, and the troops standing by us, and quelling it with a high hand.’ He replied, ‘That was the disease.’ I said, ‘Neither he nor I should live to see society where it had been, and ought to be;’ to which he assented. I have no doubt he is sincere; yet he and his party are the real authors of the spirit we deplore.”†

* A confidential friend of the duke of Wellington says:—“We fell upon the general situation of things, which the duke allowed was almost as bad as could be; nor could he see the remedy, if the upper and middle ranks would not stir; but all, he continued, with some sadness as well as indignation, seem struck with panic—ourselves and all; and if the country is lost, it will be through our own cowardice. ‘Everything,’ said he, ‘is audacity and insolence on one side, and tameness on ours. We go to the house, seemingly, on purpose to be insulted. The opposition know it, and act accordingly.’ I said, ‘I feared it was particularly so in the house of commons, where the ministerial bench, with the exception of lord Castlereagh, seemed like victims.’‡

“The principal ministers went in daily danger of their lives. Lord Sidmouth never drove out without a case of loaded pistols on the seat of the carriage, ready for instant use; and when either of them was recognised in the public streets, he was sure to be greeted by groans and hisses, and sometimes by more formidable missiles.”

Mr. Freemantle, writing to the marquis of Buckingham, asks:—“How can all this end? It has not a little benefited her cause that it appears how much the king personally has prepared the evidence by his emissaries abroad, and more particularly by his Hanoverian engines. I assure you I am quite low-spirited about it. One cannot calculate on anything less than subversion of all government and authority if this is to go on, and how it is to end no one can foresee. The press now is completely open to treason, sedition, blasphemy, and falsehood, with impunity. This alone, if it continues, must debauch the public mind. I want some volunteer establishments to be formed, or something to be done, without a moment's delay, by the well-disposed and loyal who have influence to check the torrent, and to guard against the explosion which must inevitably

* “Memoirs of the Court of George IV.,” vol. i., p. 31.

† Phipps's “Memoirs of R. P. Ward,” vol. ii., p. 61.

‡ Phipps's “Memoirs of Ward.”

take place. The king here confines himself to the cottage; has hourly messengers—that is, dragoons—who are posted on the road by dozens, and we hear is in a state of the greatest irritation; but he is very seldom seen; and this is only what one picks up. You have no conception how thoroughly the public mind, even in this neighbourhood, is inflamed by this melancholy subject; and how the queen is still supported.”*

The gravity of the situation is strikingly presented in a letter from lord Eldon to his brother, during a visit to Encomb. Writing thence, he says:—

“I was saluted at Ringwood by a collection of people shouting into my coach, while changing horses, ‘Queen Caroline for ever!’ and I had the same salutation from passengers on the road. Here they have settled all matters, because they say, sweepingly, Italians are not to be believed. In short, the cause here is all against the king. I have long thought that the *effect* of recrimination will be produced, even if *evidence* of recrimination should be refused.

“The received notion, that this would be treason if committed here, must be looked to. Suppose it had been committed here; adultery on his part would have been no defence—could not have been given in evidence. See, then, what would be the case—she is convicted; does he pardon, so as to save her life? If he can’t have a divorce, because of adultery on his part, he must either let the law take its course against her, and divorce by execution, or take the pardoned traitor to his arms, to love and cherish. Notwithstanding all that can be said, I should, if I were to decide to-day, argue the case as if recrimination had been proved.”

The danger of civil war was felt to be so great that earnest attempts were made to conciliate the queen, and to effect a compromise. Mr. Wilberforce was very zealous in this matter. He wrote to the king, entreating him to restore the queen’s name to the liturgy. This was a vital point. The ministry had expressed their intention to resign if this must be done. Mr. Wilberforce headed a deputation from the house of commons, who proceeded to her residence, in full court costume. He describes her manner as “extremely dignified, but very stern and haughty.” He got no thanks from either party for his attempts at negotiation. He was very much abused by Cobbett, and other writers on the popular side. “What a lesson,” he exclaimed, “it is to a man, not to set his heart on low popularity, when, after forty years’ disinterested public service, I am believed to be a perfect rascal!”† Lord John Russell published a letter, addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, urging him to interfere again, and expressing the opinion that, perhaps, the fate of the country was in his hands. “Alas!” wrote the venerable philanthropist, “surely we never were in such a scrape. The bulk of the people, I grant, are run mad, but then it was a species of insanity on which we might have reckoned, because we knew their prejudices against foreigners, their being easily led away by appeals to their generous feelings; and then the doses with which they are plied are enough to intoxicate

much stronger heads than most of theirs.” Again he observes, “I feel deeply the evil that so bad a woman as I fear she is should carry the victory by sheer impudence—if she is guilty—and assume the part of a person deeply injured.” The state of feeling between the belligerent parties is thus described by the lord chancellor:—

“You will see, by the impressions of the seal on this scrap, that cabinets are quite in fashion; daily, nightly, hourly cabinets are in fashion. The lower orders here are all queen’s folks: few of the middling or higher orders, except the profligate, or those who are endeavouring to acquire power through mischief. The bulk of those who are in parliament are afraid of the effect of the disclosures and discussions which must take place if there is not some pacific settlement. The queen is obstinate, and makes no propositions tending to that—at least, as yet. The king is determined, and will hear of none—of nothing but thorough investigation, and of what he, and those who consider *themselves* more than him, think and talk of—thorough exposure of Q., and divorce. To this extent parliament will not go; but, amidst this mess of difficulties, something must arise in a few days, or it will happen. I think, in a few days, that the king will try whether he cannot find an administration which can bring parliament more into his views than the present ministers. I do not see how matters can go on a week longer with the present administration remaining. I think no administration, who have any regard for him, will go to the length he wishes, as an administration, and if they will, they cannot take parliament along with them. That body is afraid of disclosures—not on one side only—which may affect the monarchy itself.”

Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman met the duke of Wellington and lord Castlereagh on the 15th of June, to discuss an adjustment; when it was laid down, as a preliminary, that the queen must not be understood to admit, nor the king to retract, anything; and that the questions to be examined were—the future residence of the queen; her title, when travelling on the continent; the non-exercise of certain rights of patronage in England; and the income to be assigned to her for life.

This fourth topic the queen desired might be altogether laid aside in these conferences; and the differences which arose upon the first proposition prevented any discussion on the second and third. They suggested that her majesty should be officially introduced by the king’s ministers abroad to foreign courts, or, at least, to the court of some one state which she might select for her residence; and that her name should be restored to the liturgy, or something conceded by way of equivalent, the nature of which, however, was not specified by her negotiators.

It was answered that, on the subject of the liturgy, there could be no change of what had been resolved; that, with respect to her residence in any foreign state, the king, although he could not properly require of any foreign power to *receive* at its court any person not received at the court of England, would, however, cause official notification to be made of her legal character as queen; and that a king’s yacht, or a ship of war, should be provided to convey her to the port she might select.

* “Memoirs,” &c., by the Duke, vol. i., pp. 45—67.

† “Wilberforce’s Life,” vol. v., pp. 65—68.

These conditions were wholly declined by the queen, and on the 19th of June the negotiations were broken up. On the 22nd two resolutions were passed by the House of Commons, declaring their opinion that, when such large advances had been made toward an adjustment, her majesty, by yielding to the wishes of the house, and forbearing to press further the propositions on which a material difference yet remained, would not be understood as shrinking from inquiry, but only as proving her desire to acquiesce in the authority of parliament.

CHAPTER III.

THE BILL OF PAINS AND PENALTIES.

ALL attempts at negotiation having failed, sealed green bags were laid upon the table of the house of lords and of the house of commons, with a message from the king to the effect that in consequence of the arrival of the queen he had communicated certain papers respecting her conduct, which he recommended to their immediate and serious attention.* The bags contained documents and evidence connected with a commission sent in 1818 to Milan and other places, to investigate charges—rather to collect evidence to sustain charges which had been made against the princess of Wales. The principal of those charges was that she had been guilty of adultery with a person named Bergami, whom she had employed as a courier, and afterwards raised to the position of her chamberlain and companion. The commission was under the direction of Sir John Leach, afterwards vice-chancellor. This was not the first investigation of which the princess of Wales was the object. As early as 1806 certain grave charges were laid against her, while residing at Blackheath, after her separation from her husband, the principal of which was that she had given birth to a child, the fruit of illicit intercourse. These charges were laid before the king, and four members of the cabinet were appointed to investigate them, pursuant to the advice of lord Thurlow. The four members were lord chancellor Erskine, earl Spencer, and the lords Grenville and Ellenborough, with Sir Samuel Romilly, the solicitor-general, as their secretary. Such names might seem to be a guarantee for proceedings perfectly constitutional in spirit at least, and in every respect just to the accused; but, nevertheless, it was altogether a star-chamber investigation. They gave the accused no notice of the charges alleged against her. Witnesses were brought with mysterious secrecy from their homes at night, and examined in the absence of the accused. She had no opportunity to contradict or explain the evidence, which was not taken down *verbatim*, but only stated in substance without the questions, so that the effect of the testimony of each witness could not be accurately ascertained. When the unhappy lady who was the subject of this “delicate investigation” heard of what was going on against her, she applied for advice to the ex-chancellor Eldon, “who was delighted to become her patron,” says lord Campbell, “for he thought that he might thereby please the king, who he believed

secretly favoured her. Although his majesty had sanctioned this investigation, he was pleased to thwart the prince, whom he regarded as a political enemy; he expected that an opportunity might arise for censuring the conduct of the ministers. Accordingly, a very intimate intercourse, both by visits and letters, was established between him and her royal highness. Lord Eldon at that period would often dine with her at Blackheath, and to him she used to assign the seat of honour on her right hand. In Germany it had not been the custom to help the ladies near them to wine, but each sex filled their own glasses at their option. The princess, however, as lord Eldon related, used to reverse, in some sort, our old English fashion in his favour, for she would quietly fill his glass herself, and so frequently, that he seldom left her house without feeling that he had exceeded the limits of discretion. Those, indeed, who recollect the proverb, that ‘though one man may take a horse to the wall, ten men cannot make him drink, will moderate their commiseration for the hard lot of the ex-chancellor.’”

Mr. Horace Twiss, in his “Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon,” passes lightly over this connection with the princess, which was not the most creditable to his hero, viewed in the light of his subsequent conduct. He gives some of the letters of her royal highness to lord Eldon, written in the most friendly and confiding spirit, but says nothing of the splendid entertainment given to her at his house, and the other proofs which he afforded of ardent devotion to her cause. The commissioners made a report, fully acquitting the princess on the main charge, which was that of having given birth to a child in 1802. “This report,” says Mr. Twiss, “was dated the 14th of July, 1806,” but the unhappy lady who was the subject of it seems not to have been regularly apprised of its contents until the 11th of August, when a copy of it was sent to her by Lord Erskine.*

Sir Samuel Romilly says:—“The result of this examination was such as left a perfect conviction on my mind, and, I believe, on the minds of the four lords, that the boy in question is the son of Sophia Austin; that he was born in Brownlow Street hospital on the 11th of July, 1802; and was taken by the princess into her house on the 15th of November in the same year.”† If we could be sure of any fact in history, one might suppose that there could be no doubt about the fact he has stated regarding the mysterious parentage of “Billy Austin;” but lord Campbell says, “It is now ascertained that he was of a totally different parentage, and born in Germany.”

The cause of lord Eldon’s zeal for the princess of Wales was, no doubt, the hope that he would thereby please the king, and prepare the way for his own restoration to office; but when he saw that the regent, whom he had so strenuously opposed, was about to reign, he turned about suddenly, and worshipped the rising sun. He could not plead, in justification of this change, any new light thrown upon the character of the queen, for he made a statement in confidence to lord Grey, which shows how little credit is

* Hansard, 886.

* Twiss’s “Life of Eldon,” vol. II., p. 24.

† “Memoirs of Sir S. Romilly,” vol. II., p. 244.

due to him for consistency, sincerity, or a nice sense of honour. Although at the time of his intimacy with the princess he maintained that she was the most chaste, and the most injured of her sex, he said, "My opinion is, and *always was*, that, though she was not with child, *she supposed herself to be with child*."^{*} The four lords had added to their verdict of acquittal the remark that evidence had been laid before them of other particulars respecting the conduct of her royal highness, "such as must, especially considering her exalted rank and station, necessarily give occasion to very unfavourable interpretations;" and it was intimated to her by lord chancellor Erskine that "she was to be admonished by his majesty to be more circumspect in her conduct." Under lord Eldon's advice, she several times wrote to the king, complaining of the manner in which the proceedings against her had been conducted by his ministers, solemnly denying the levities which the report imputed to her, and praying that she might again be admitted into the presence of her uncle, her father-in-law, and her sovereign, who had ever hitherto proved her friend and protector. She would have been at once received by the king, but for the interference of the prince, and the advice of the ministers. But ultimately all obstacles were removed, and she appeared at court. Considering, therefore, the former relations between the princess of Wales and lord Eldon, as her confidential adviser, it is not surprising that he should have taken credit to himself for feeling some pain in being the chief instrument, in the hand of her royal persecutor, for effecting her ruin.

The crown had resolved to proceed against the queen by a bill of pains and penalties, the introduction of which was preceded by the appointment of a secret committee, to perform functions somewhat analogous to those of a grand jury, in finding bills against accused parties. Mr. Brougham earnestly protested against the appointment of a secret committee, which was opposed by lords Lansdowne and Holland. The course was explained and defended by the lord chancellor, who said that the object of ministers in proposing a secret committee was to prevent injustice towards the accused; that committee would not be permitted to pronounce a decision; it would merely find, like a grand jury, that matter of accusation did or did not exist; such matter, even if found to have existence, could not be the subject of *judicial proceeding*, strictly so called. The offence of a queen consort, or a princess consort of Wales, committing adultery with a person owing allegiance to the British crown, would be that of a principal in high treason, because, by statute, it was high treason in him; and as accessories in high treason are principals, she would thus be guilty of high treason as a principal: but as the act of a person owing no allegiance to the British crown could not be high treason in him, so neither could a princess be guilty of that crime, merely by being an accessory to such a person's act. Yet although, for this reason, there could be no judicial proceeding in such a case, there might be a legislative one; and the

existence or non-existence of grounds for such legislative proceeding was a matter into which it would be fit that a secret committee should inquire. In no case could injustice be done, because that committee's decision would not be final. There might be differences of opinion about the best mode of proceeding, but, for God's sake, said the lord chancellor, if their lordships differed, let it be understood that they all had the same object in view, and that their difference was only about the best mode of effecting it.

Mr. Canning, who had been on terms of intimacy with her majesty, declined to take any part in the proceedings, declaring that nothing would induce him to do anything calculated to reflect upon the honour and virtue of the queen. The queen intimated to the lord chancellor that she meant to come in person to the house of lords when her case should next be discussed there. He answered that he would not permit her to enter without the authority of the house, for which she must previously apply. She then desired that he would deliver a message to the house in her name, which he declined, stating that "the house did not receive messages from anybody but the king, unless they were sent as answers to addresses from the house." Lord Campbell thinks he was quite wrong. Lord Eldon thus refers to the matter in a letter written at the time, "when they brought a petition from her to be presented to the house by me; this I declined also, and for this Messrs. Grey, Lansdowne, and Holland abused me pretty handsomely. However, I don't think I suffered much by all that, and I am resolved I will not be employed in any way by this lady." The petition was presented by lord Dacre, on which occasion the lord chancellor declared that he had no objection to its being submitted to the consideration of the house, adding that "he would sooner suffer death than admit any abatement of the principle that a person accused is not therefore to be considered guilty." Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman, her majesty's attorney and solicitor-general, were then called in to support the petition, which prayed that their lordships would not prosecute a secret inquiry against her. The powerful pleading of these two orators had an immense effect upon the public mind. On the following day lord Grey moved that the order for the appointment of a secret committee should be discharged. His motion was negatived by a majority of one hundred and two to forty-seven. This was the first division on the proceedings against the queen, and so large a majority naturally gave great confidence to the government. The secret committee accordingly set to work, opened the green bag, and examined the charges. On the 4th of July they brought in their report, which stated "that allegations supported by the concurrent testimony of a great number of persons in various situations of life, and residing in different parts of Europe, appeared to be calculated so deeply to affect the character of the queen, the dignity of the crown, and the moral feeling and honour of the country, that it was indispensable that they should become the subject of a solemn inquiry, which would best be effected in the course of a legislative proceeding." On the 5th lord Liverpool introduced the bill of "Pains and Penalties" against her majesty, which,

^{*} Lord Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors," vol. vii., p. 197. "Romilly's Memoirs," vol. iii., p. 194.

having recited in the preamble that she carried on an adulterous intercourse with Bergami, her menial servant, enacted that she should be degraded from her station and title of queen, and that her marriage with the king should be dissolved." Counsel were again heard against that mode of proceeding, a second reading was set down for the 17th of August, when the preamble was to be proved, and the "trial" to begin.

In the meantime lord Erskine moved in vain for a list of the witnesses, which was peremptorily refused, so that the queen had no means of contradicting their testimony, should it be false or fabricated, or of supplying materials

James's Square, and proceeded to the house of lords in her new state carriage, an elegant landau, drawn by six beautiful chestnut horses, which the people were with difficulty dissuaded from unyoking, that they might draw it themselves. As she passed Carlton House, the crowd gave three cheers, and also at the Treasury. The soldiers on guard at the former place, and at the house of lords, presented arms when she arrived. The queen's carriage was preceded by alderman Wood, and followed by one of her majesty's travelling carriages, in which were Sir Keppel Craven and Sir William Gell, her chamberlains. The way from Charing Cross to Westminster Abbey was crowded



LORD ELDON.

for an effective cross-examination. The lord chancellor's excuse for refusing this constitutional right was a miserable subterfuge. He said he would give the accused ample time to collect counter-evidence; but in the meantime the foul mass of evidence for the prosecution was left to produce its damaging and contaminating effect on the public mind.

The memorable 17th of August arrived, and the curtain was raised on a new act in the great drama, on which the whole nation gazed with the deepest interest, and with feverish anxiety. The queen left her residence in St.

to excess, and all the windows of the houses on either side were filled with people, particularly with ladies. Such was the enthusiasm of the people, that the barrier erected at St. Margaret's Church was insufficient to keep them back, and the dense mass forced their way through, and reached Palace Yard shortly after the queen. Sir T. Tyrwhitt, as gentleman usher of the black rod, attended by the officers of the house, received the queen at the private entrance which had been prepared for her. She entered at the door near the throne, supported by lord A. Hamilton, and attended by lady A. Hamilton. She was

dressed in deep mourning, and wore a large white veil. Her demeanour was in the highest degree dignified. On her entrance the peers all rose, and she was pleased to salute them in return.

The duke of Leinster, in pursuance of his intention to oppose the bill in all its stages, moved that the order of the day be rescinded. The motion was negatived by a majority of two hundred and sixty to forty-one; the number of peers present being three hundred and one. Lord Carnarvon denounced the bill of pains and penalties as a measure unnecessary and unconstitutional. It was a species of *ex post facto* and illegitimate mode of proceeding against an individual, an unprecedented anomaly in the law. In one of the cases which they had adduced as the best precedent, the sentence passed on the criminal was that he should be boiled to death! Far better to have drawn a veil over the transactions, than to have searched the Alps, the Apennines, and the ocean, for evidence against the queen. The measure had excited the disgust of every honest man in the kingdom.

Lord Grey moved that it should be referred to the judges to determine whether adultery committed out of the country with a foreigner amounted to high treason. The motion was carried. The judges retired, and, after an absence of twenty minutes, returned, with their decision announced by chief justice Abbott, which was, that the crime in question was not punishable as high treason, under the statute of Edward III. Counsel on both sides were admitted; Messrs. Brougham and Denman, for the queen, sitting on the right of the bar, and the king's attorney and solicitor-general on the left. Mr. Brougham prayed to be heard against the principle of the bill. Permission was granted, and he addressed their lordships in a strain of impressive eloquence, demonstrating that the mode of proceeding now adopted was in the highest degree unjust to his illustrious client. He concluded by imploring their lordships to retract their steps, and thus become the saviours of their country.

Next morning Mr. Denman spoke nearly two hours for the queen, strongly maintaining her right of recommitment against the king, who, when seeking for a divorce, should come into court with clean hands. He commented on the several clauses of the bill as he went along. He said the person who framed it had worked himself up into an ebullition of moral zeal, and used expressions for the full support of which the bribes and schemes of the prosecutors would produce witnesses. Referring to a former investigation, he called the attention of the house to the letter of Mrs. Lisle, in 1806, when flirting and familiarity were the worst things alleged against her royal highness. On the subject of familiarity he referred to a note addressed by a waiter to the prince of Wales—"Sam, of the Cocoanut Coffeehouse, presents his compliments to his royal highness, and begs" so and so. That illustrious person remarked, "This is very well to us, but it won't do for him to speak so to Norfolk and Arundel." He concluded by apologising to the queen for putting even the hypothesis of her guilt, which he never could believe would be established; and whatever might be enacted by means of suborned perjury or foul conspiracy, he never would pay

to any one who might usurp her situation the respect to which the laws of God and man entitled her alone.

On the third day lord King moved that the bill was not one of state necessity or expediency. This gave occasion to lord Liverpool, then at the head of the government, to express his sentiments upon the measure. He declared upon his honour and in his conscience that, if the bill passed, he believed the king would not marry again. But if the charges against the queen were proved, it was absolutely impossible not to conclude with an enactment for a divorce. Earl Grey replied to lord Liverpool, and called upon their lordships, from respect for their own character, not to persevere with the measure before them.

The attorney-general was then called in, when he proceeded to state the case against the queen. He traced her majesty's conduct from the time at which she left this country, in 1814. Her suite consisted of lady Charlotte Lindsay and lady Elizabeth Forbes, and the hon. Keppell Craven; Sir William Gell and a Mr. Fitzgerald as chamberlains, with captain Hash as equerry; Dr. Holland as physician; and other persons, in various capacities. She went first to Brunswick, her native place, and thence to Milan, where she remained three weeks. There Bartholomeo Bergami was received into her service as a courier, having been a servant in a similar capacity to a general Picco. The princess went next to Rome, and thence to Naples, where she arrived on the 8th of November, 1814. Her adopted child, William Austin, then only six or seven years of age, to whom she was particularly attached, had been in the habit of sleeping in a bed in the same room with her, while, according to the domestic arrangements that had been adopted, Bergami slept, among other menial servants, at a distance. On the 9th of November, three weeks after his appointment, an apartment was assigned to Bergami near her own bedroom, and communicating with it by means of a corridor. The surprise occasioned by this alteration was increased when the princess directed that the child Austin should no longer sleep in her room. There was an air of hurry, agitation, and embarrassment about her manner which awakened suspicion, which was increased in the morning, according to the story of the witnesses, when they found that her own bed had not been occupied, and instead of summoning her female attendants at the usual time, she remained in the apartment of Bergami until a late hour. Her recent arrival at Naples naturally induced persons of consequence to pay their respects to her, but she was not accessible. The attorney-general thought their lordships could have no doubt that "this was the commencement of that most scandalous, degrading, and licentious intercourse which continued and increased." The natural effect of this was that Bergami assumed airs of importance, and became haughty and arrogant with the other servants. A few days afterwards the princess gave a masked ball to the person then filling the Neapolitan throne. She first appeared as a Neapolitan peasant, but soon retired to assume another character, taking the courier with her, for the purpose of changing her costume. She then came forth as the genius of history, in a dress, or rather want of dress, of a most indecent and disgusting kind.

But the important fact was this, that that change of dress took place in the presence and with the assistance of the courier, Bergami, and no other person. She afterwards appeared as a Turkish peasant, accompanied by Bergami in a corresponding dress, though he afterwards returned alone apparently chagrined. It would be proved also that she always breakfasted with Bergami, though he still acted as valet or footman. About this time he received a kick from a horse, and had the influence to introduce a servant into the family to attend him, which servant saw Bergami and the queen kissing each other. From November to March the intimacy increased, and when the queen left Naples, she was deserted by Lady E. Forbes, Sir W. Gell, Mr. Craven, &c. Another fact which occurred at Naples was important. A public masquerade was held at the Theatre St. Charles, and to this the queen went, accompanied by Bergami and a *filie de chambre*. The dresses were so indecent that the parties were hastily compelled to withdraw. They had gone there in a common *fiacre*, or hackney-coach. It was no slight aggravation, that the queen knew at this time that Bergami was a married man, and that thus a double adultery was committed. During the whole of this time Bergami was admitted into the queen's bed-room, without knocking or notice. The assumption of Bergami was such, in consequence, that he soon became the lord and master of the house. On quitting Naples, the queen went to Rome, and from thence to Civita Vecchia, where she embarked on board a frigate. On her arrival at Genoa, she had no English lady in her suite. Bergami still filled the same menial capacity after this embarkation. At Genoa the intimacy increased. Bergami accompanied the queen in her rides and walks, and an apartment was assigned to him near her bed-room. Here it was found that the queen's bed was so little discomposed, that it was not necessary to re-make it. How happened it that this man always slept near the queen, and that his bed frequently appeared as if two persons had been in it? What conclusion could be formed, but that an adulterous and licentious intercourse had taken place? If this evidence were not found sufficient, it would be put beyond doubt by subsequent facts. Bergami had a daughter named Victoire, and at Genoa this child was received into the queen's family with a brother of Bergami's, named Louis, and Faustina, his sister—nay, even his mother was also entertained by her majesty. How was this to be accounted for? At Milan, lady C. Campbell, also one of the ladies in waiting upon her majesty, quitted the queen, leaving her no female attendant. In her stead, the queen received a person of vulgar manners and low habits, another sister of Bergami's, dignified by the name of the countess Oldi. She was now the only lady of honour attending and dining with the queen. Her majesty next made a tour to Venice—Bergami still as courier on the road. A circumstance occurred at Venice, strongly showing the intimacy between the queen and Bergami. The attendants and company having withdrawn after dinner, Bergami alone remained with the queen, who was seen to place a gold chain round his neck, which he returned to her majesty's person, and she again playfully gave it to

him. On her return to Milan, Mr. W. Burrell quitted her service, after which it was observed that the queen's conduct to Bergami became even less restrained. Her house was called the Villa Villani, and there she presented her courier with a silk dressing gown, which he wore every morning. At this time her majesty also became more familiar with her servants, the consequence of her wicked attachment. The courier was advanced to the office of chamberlain, and dined constantly with the queen. One of the female servants would testify that she had often heard Bergami in the apartment of the queen, while the latter was frequently seen passing from Bergami's room to her own. One morning the servants observed the door of Bergami's room open, and the queen was seen on her way from thence to her own apartment, with the pillow under her arm on which she was in the habit of sleeping. The state of the dress of the queen also gave evidence that she had but just left the bed of her paramour. If this fact stood alone, without any support from the many other circumstances he had detailed, the attorney-general contended that it would satisfy the scruples of any jury in an ordinary case of adultery. It was to be remarked also that the daughter of Bergami, two or three years old, for whom the queen showed a love almost parental, and who was now dignified by the title of princess, slept constantly in her bed or bedroom, and was frequently heard to cry in the night for its mamma (for so the queen was called by it), when the queen was absent with Bergami, and when countess Oldi could not pacify it. At Catania she had influence to procure for Bergami the dignity of knight of Malta. She ordinarily spoke of him as the chevalier, and forsook all society but his.

The attorney-general referred to a number of facts of a similar kind to those already detailed; also to instances of indelicacy and indecency, in which the queen was said to have indulged in the presence of her attendants and of strangers—things which seemed quite incredible, but which, if true, would be evidence of gross depravity.

CHAPTER IV.

The Queen's Trial—The Evidence—The Defence.

On the fourth day, after the conclusion of his address, the attorney-general proceeded to call his witnesses. Before the examination commenced, the rolling of the drums without announced the arrival of the queen, who entered and took her seat, looking more animated and cheerful than usual. The first witness called was Theodore Majocchi, a robust man, with large whiskers and bushy hair. Thé queen, on hearing his name, turned quickly round, screamed loudly, and exclaimed, "What, Theodore!" She then darted from her seat, to her apartment, though she had not been in more than three minutes when this occurred. Her friends asserted that the exclamation was, "*Oh, traditore!*" (oh, traitor!*) for what reason does not appear, unless to imply that he was a perjurer. The effect upon the house was electrical. A long pause succeeded. Peers, counsel, strangers, looked as if they

* "Diary of the Times of George IV.," vol. II., p. 348.

doubted the evidence of their eyes and ears; not a word was spoken, and five minutes elapsed before the proceedings were resumed.

Majocci stated that he had been in the service of the princess three years, and deposed to a number of the facts and circumstances referred to by the attorney-general. He was cross-examined by Mr. Brougham. While the cross-examination was proceeding, the queen entered the house, and took her seat as before, their lordships rising and bowing to her. She departed before its conclusion, receiving the same mark of respect. The cross-examination was continued next day. The queen came into the house as usual, and on passing Majocci, cast upon him a look of stern reproach, and then instantly averted her eyes from him.

Gaetano Paturga was the second witness called. He was rather a shabbily-dressed, ill-looking man, about thirty years of age. He had seen the princess and Bergami walking together on the deck, arm in arm. He had also observed them in various situations, sometimes sitting on a gun, their arms being round each other to support them, as the gun was too small. He had seen the princess and Bergami sitting on the bed.

The next witness examined was Vincenzo Gargulio, the owner and captain of the vessel called *Industry*, which had been engaged to carry the princess of Wales from Augusta to Tunis, and thence to Greece and the Holy Land. He deposed that he had made arrangements for the party before they came on board, and that the princess had them altered immediately after her arrival, causing a door in the dining-room to be closed, which was nailed up accordingly. After the first two nights Bergami had his bed removed into the saloon, from which he could see the princess in her bedroom when the door was open. Also that she had a tent erected for herself on deck, in which there was a sofa and a travelling bed; that Bergami slept in one of these, and the princess in the other, till they arrived at the port of Auzo. He had seen Bergami lying on his back in bed, and the princess sitting near him. He was with her on all occasions, even when she went to take her bath. The princess used to walk arm in arm with Bergami on deck, and sit with him with his arm round her waist.

Captain Pechell was produced to state that he had refused to dine with the princess when she was on board because Bergami, whom he had known as a menial servant, was at her table, not thinking it becoming his position as a naval officer to associate with such a person.

Captain Briggs, of the royal navy, gave similar testimony as to Bergami dining with the princess. And he also stated that she altered his arrangements about the beds on board the *Leviathan*. The apartment next her own, which he intended for the ladies, she appropriated to Bergami.

Pietro Cuchi deposed that he saw Bergami in the princess's bedroom, with only his dressing-gown and drawers on; and also that he had seen them through a key-hole.

Barbara Crautz, a German, stated that she saw Bergami's bare arm round the neck of the princess, who jumped up and was frightened when witness entered (here

the queen rose hastily from her seat, and withdrew, followed by lady Anne Hamilton). She also mentioned other proofs of improper familiarity.

The Italian witnesses often created amusement, when under examination, by the frequent answer, "*Non mi ricordo.*" The most important of the set was Mademoiselle Dumont, a maid, who had always been about the person of the princess, waiting on her and assisting at her toilet. She was clever and ready, answering with fluency and precision the questions put to her. Her direct examination was calculated to make a great impression upon the house against the queen. She confirmed generally the evidence given by the other foreign witnesses as to the position of the beds, and the intimacy between the queen and Bergami. Among other things, she stated that she had in her suite the mother and sister of Bergami, his brother, and one of his cousins. The sister Faustina was a married woman, and had her husband also in the house. She stated that at Jerusalem the Order of St. Sepulchre was conferred upon Bergami; and that while there the princess created the Order of St. Caroline, of which she made him grand master, and of which he afterwards wore the decorations. She stated that at the Villa d'Este the queen and Bergami performed together at a theatre; he dressed and dancing like harlequin, and she dressed like columbine. He had a little daughter named Victorine, not by his wife, of whom the princess was particularly fond, and whom she caused to sleep in her own room. This little girl had worn ear-rings, which her royal highness took in exchange for others, and wore them in her own ears. She also wore ear-rings which had been worn by Bergami himself. Thus she had two rings upon each ear. She had made him presents of gold and diamonds. She had seen his black silk cravat and his slippers in the bedroom of the princess. She had seen him pass into her room at night. Bergami had purchased a house and estate, which was called *La Barona*, and afterwards the *Villa Bergami*, where the royal party lived for some time. The princess was accustomed to address him in terms of endearment, such as—"My heart." While at *La Barona*, balls were given to people of low condition and bad character, who behaved very improperly. Bergami told a story to the princess about the conduct of some of them in the presence of witness, so indecent, that she refused to repeat it. In consequence of this refusal, everything about the "indecent story" was expunged from the official report of the evidence. She had seen the princess with her head leaning against Bergami's arm, and his other arm round her waist. The princess and Bergami sat together for their busts. She once appeared in pantaloons at Pesaro, when Bergami said, "Oh, how pretty you are. I like you much better so." She was then at her toilet, and her neck was stripped. When parting on one occasion, they took each other by the hand, and the princess said, "*Adieu, mon cœur; adieu, mon cher ami.*" And Bergami said, "*Adieu, au revoir.*" The princess told witness that she intended to have masses said for the soul of Bergami's father.

This witness was cross-examined by Mr. Williams. Though her evidence was interpreted, it appeared that she had been in England thirteen months and that she had

taken lessons in English four or five months, and could speak it, though not with ease. She had been called Colombier in England. She would not swear that she had not been called the countess Colombier. In common with the other Italian witnesses she had been examined before the Milan commissioners, and since she came to this country she had been sworn before a magistrate as to the truth of her depositions.

When this avowal was made, Mr. Brougham interposed, and said he was decidedly of opinion, that if a case like the present came before any of the ordinary tribunals, the court itself would interfere. It appeared that this witness had been sworn out of court, and in the absence of the parties opposed to the bill, before a magistrate. This appeared to have been done after the proceedings had been instituted in that court. When it was known that the witness had to appear there, she had been taken before a magistrate, and sworn to her deposition. How far the privileges of that house and the interests of justice were interfered with by such a course of proceeding, their lordships were most competent to decide; but he must submit to their consideration that such was not the course which ought to have been adopted by the opposite party.

Mr. Williams had one observation to make. Their lordships were aware of the manifold dangers which might arise from a practice like that which was now called in question. Every witness was supposed to come into court for the purpose of telling the truth, the whole truth, on both sides. If a party were pledged by an oath to an *ex-parte* statement of the case, was there not reason that party, bound to such statement by the solemn obligation of an oath, would be liable to be prejudiced against one party, and in some measure restrained from telling the truth, or, according to the language of the law, the whole truth? By that proceeding, of which he complained, it appeared to him that the conscience of the witness about to appear in court would no longer be at liberty to give that testimony which it was desirable, for the purpose of justice, should be obtained.

The lord chancellor would give it as his opinion without any doubt, that the effect of the practice in question could not go to the extent supposed by the learned counsel for the defence. If the credit of the witness would be affected by anything that might transpire, that would be open to remark when the whole case could be understood.

A great sensation was caused in the house by the production of two letters, the authorship of which the witness acknowledged. They disclose the motives of her conduct in appearing as a witness for the prosecution. She said, addressing the queen:—

"It is on my knees that I write to my generous benefactress, beseeching her to pardon my boldness; I am convinced that if her royal highness knew the frightful state into which I am plunged, she would not be offended at my temerity. A crowd of reflections on the past goodness of her royal highness, and on my apparent ingratitude, overwhelm me. May her royal highness deign to take pity on me; may she deign to restore me her precious favour, which I have unhappily lost by the most deadly imprudence.

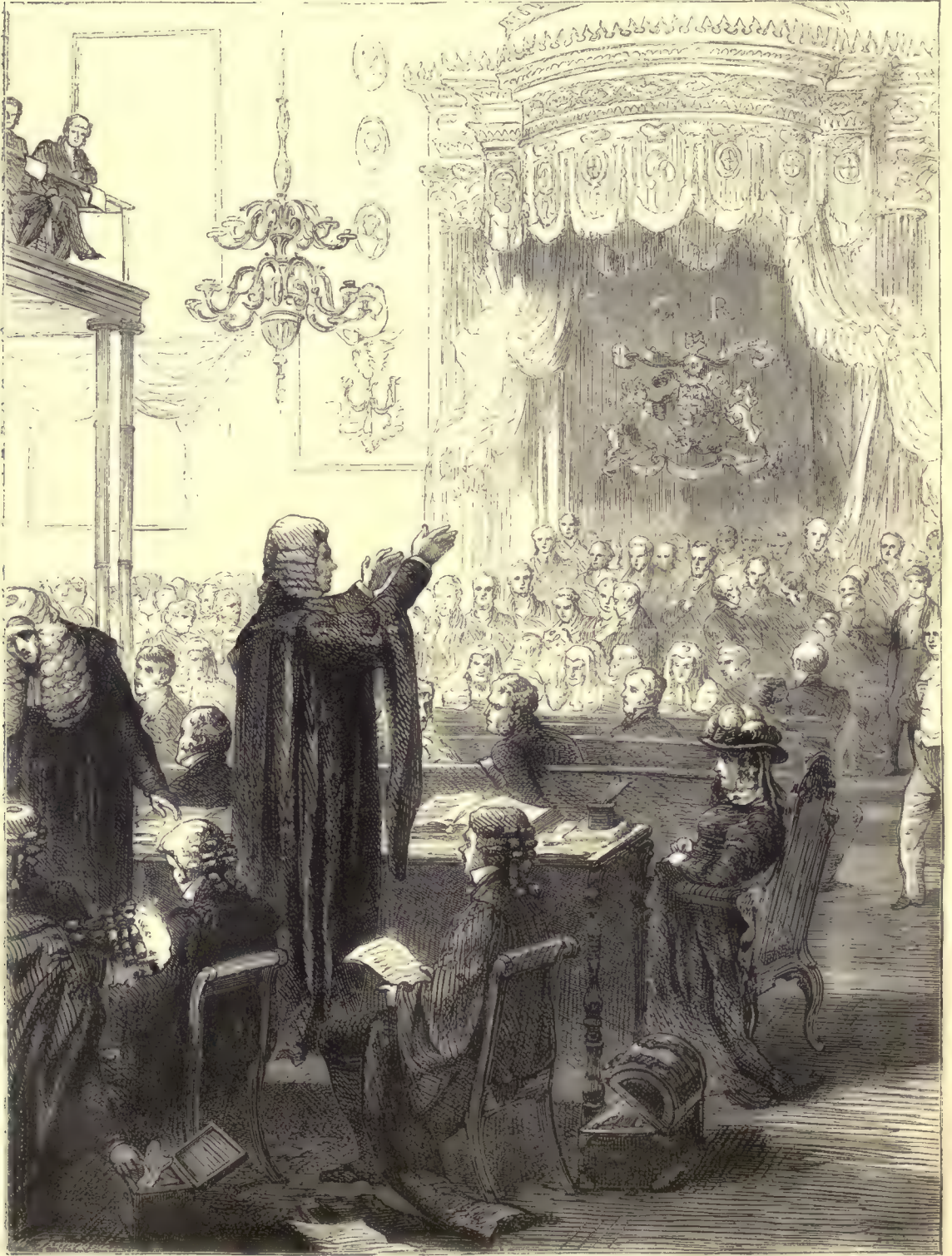
"I dare again to conjure, to supplicate, the clemency and compassion of her royal highness, that she will grant me the extreme favour of destroying those two fatal letters. To know that they are in the hands of her royal highness, and that they will constantly bear testimony against my past conduct, kills me. The aversion which I have merited on the part of her royal highness, instead of diminishing, would be increased by reading them. I permit myself to assure her royal highness that it is only the granting of these two favours which can preserve my life and restore to me that repose which I have lost. My fault, it is true, is very great, and irreparable; but love is blind: how many faults has he not caused even the greatest of men to commit!"

In the second letter, addressed to her sister, Mdle. Dumont says:—

"Can you not, my dear, divine the cause of all my sadness? Alas! was it not the regret of having quitted her royal highness, and of knowing that she suspected my character, and taxed me with ingratitude? Oh, God! I would surrender half my life, could she but read my heart; she would then be convinced of the infinite respect, the unlimited attachment, and the perfect affection I have always entertained for her august person. How often, in a numerous circle, have I, with enthusiasm, enumerated her great qualities, her rare talents, her mildness, her patience, her charity; in short, all the perfections which she possesses in so eminent a degree! How often have I seen my hearers affected, and heard them exclaim that the world is unjust, to cause so much unhappiness to one who deserves it so little, and who is worthy of being happy!"

"But I had almost forgotten to confide to you a thing which will surprise you as much as it has me. The 24th of last month I was taking some refreshment at my aunt's, when I was informed an unknown person desired to deliver me a letter, and that he would trust it to no one else. I went down-stairs, and desired him to come up into the room. Judge of my astonishment when I broke the seal; a proposal was made for me to set off for London, under the pretence of being a governess. I was promised high protection, and a brilliant fortune in a short time. The letter was without a signature; but, to assure me of the truth of it, I was informed I might draw on a banker for as much money as I wished. Can you conceive anything so singular? Some lines escaped from the pen of the writer discovered to me the cheat, and I did not hesitate to reply in such terms as must have convinced him I was not quite a dupe. Notwithstanding all my efforts, I could draw no *éclaircissement* from the bearer; he acted with the greatest mystery. You see, my dear, with what promptitude the enemies of our generous benefactress always act. There must be spies continually around her, for, no sooner had I left Pesaro, than it was known, with all its circumstances, in the capital of Europe. They thought to find me a person revengeful and ambitious, but, thank God, I am exempt from both these feelings; and money, acquired at the expense of repose and duty, would never tempt me, though I should be at the last extremity.

"Dear sister—If you dare, place me at the feet of her royal highness, beseeching her to accept my humble



THE TRIAL OF QUEEN CAROLINE. MR. BROUGHAM'S SPEECH FOR THE DEFENCE

respects. Do not fail, I entreat you, when she speaks of me, to endeavour to convince her my repentance is still the same; that I conjure her to restore me to her favour. Tell me, if her royal highness is still so enraged against me, and if there is not any appearance of a pardon; but tell me always the truth. Try, also, to persuade her royal highness that I am, and always shall be, so entirely devoted to her, that no sacrifice I could make for her would appear too great, and that she may even dispose of my life, which shall for ever be consecrated to her service. Tell the baron, also, that I am very sensible of his remem-

Hieronimus on the receipt of this letter, I beg he will immediately send an order to Mr. — for six months' pay, and address it to me. He must not delay, for I have no money. You will not do wrong if you send me, at the same time, the two napoleons, to make up the twenty-five, if you can. It is I who send you the gown instead of lace; you should trim it with muslin. Make my compliments to Mr. —, and tell him the first time I write again I will give him more particulars respecting his son, because I expect to have more room. I wish very much to know how ink is made with that powder which he gave me, and



QUEEN CAROLINE.

brance, and beg him to accept the assurance of my perfect acknowledgment. Embrace for me the charming Victorine. Repeat also my thanks to the count, and assure him I shall never forget his kindness. Remember me to the countess, Madame Livia, and Mr. William, begging them to receive the assurance of my sincere friendship. If I were to tell you all those who send you salutations, I should want two more pages, for every one is interested for you, and they never cease to wish for your happiness. Believe, however, the most sincere wishes are made by us.

"You will tell Mr. Hieronimus that John is quite well, and that Mr. — is very well pleased with him in all respect. His board is not paid for; and tell Mr.

what he has done with the two pictures I sent him at the Villa d'Este? Adieu, dear and good sister; we embrace you cordially. A reply at once, if you please. Your sister,
"LOUISE DUMONT.

"À mademoiselle,
"Mademoiselle Mariette Bron,
"À Pesaro."

These extraordinary letters gave rise to some discussion in the house. On the 4th of September lord Kenyon moved that all the correspondence between his majesty's ministers and her majesty should be laid before the house; he also moved for an account of the sums of money advanced to her majesty in aid of her defence. Lord Liverpool opposed

the motion, and characterised the conduct of lord Kenyon as unfair and indecent, in having taken him by surprise; and all he should reply was, that unlimited sums were allowed to her majesty. Lord Kenyon replied with spirit, and hoped the premier would see the impropriety of the expression he had used. The noble lord explained, and said he meant nothing offensive by it. Lord Kenyon postponed his motion, but brought it forward on the 6th, and stated that he considered that the country should have the fullest information on the subject. Lord King said that they should also require the amount of money distributed on the side of the prosecution. They had heard witnesses more than once state at the bar, in the course of this inquiry, that they were to receive, in the shape of remuneration for their losses in coming here, very large sums of money. Their lordships had heard from witnesses of such a thing as a *double entendre* in written communications. He hoped this was not the case with the communications sent by his majesty's ministers to their agents abroad.

At a subsequent stage of the proceedings, Mr. Brougham called the attention of their lordships to the various and insuperable difficulties against the further prosecution of her majesty's defence. It was manifest that they could go no further with any chance of equal justice to the parties in this suit. Their lordships had seen that the grand duke of Baden did at least not compel the baron d'Ende to make his appearance at their bar. He had, indeed, given him a *congé*—a word of ominous sound in the ears of a courtier—a word the fair import of which must strike a painful sensation into the hearts of some of their lordships; for a *congé* was, as many of their lordships knew, not so much a permission to go as a permission never to come back. It was tantamount to saying "Never see my face again." It was the word appropriated to the resignation of ministers, for ministers were of course never turned out. It was the word which in France sent a man to his country seat, never to return, and, no doubt, was of similarly dreadful import in a German ear. No wonder, then, that the chamberlain, as soon as he saw the terrific expression written in plain German characters, was taken extremely ill; and he (Mr. Brougham) verily believed that the sickness was not feigned, and that if Mr. Lemon could have felt on this occasion also that part of his frame where his heart was lodged, he would have found a more violent palpitation there than when the worthy baron had invited him to feel its throbs. But it was somewhat strange that none of the reasons which restrained the baron from coming over had operated to prevent Kress, a witness for the prosecution, from leaving the territories of the grand duke. She was forced to come—that is, forced under the compulsion of Berslett. This, too, was done at the instigation of the Hanoverian government, the second branch amongst the authors of this prosecution, and the active employer of the Munsters, the Badens, and the Grimms, and all that crew. But he had already said he threw no blame on any of these parties; they had laboured in their vocation as well as others, and they were under a necessity of acting as they did. He had therefore now, seriously and solemnly, to appeal to their lordships' justice

to consider this subject as no light or trivial matter. It was in evidence before them that the minister and agents of the British government abroad had not the power of running into places and extracting evidence, material evidence, for the vindication of her majesty, although it was with perfect ease that evidence against her might be obtained in the same quarters. He felt obliged again to repeat that he threw no blame on any person; but he submitted that, from causes beyond the control and jurisdiction of that tribunal which he had now the honour of addressing, it was impossible to proceed further with any justice to the case of the defence. Undoubtedly, their lordships must be of the same opinion; and sure he was that the august monarch who now filled the English throne would be the last to desire any conclusion that should not work perfect justice to his royal consort.

The lengths to which the king and his unscrupulous agents abroad went, in fabricating evidence against the queen, in getting her excluded from foreign courts, in thwarting, mortifying, and degrading her majesty, so as, if possible, to break down her spirit and crush her utterly, are painfully detailed in the following letter, dated at Rome on the 16th of March in this year:—

"During my residence at Milan, in consequence of the infamous behaviour of Mr. Ompteda (he having bribed my servants to become the traducers of my character), one of my English gentlemen challenged him; the Austrian government sent off Mr. Ompteda. I wrote myself to the emperor of Austria, requesting his protection against spies, who employed persons to introduce themselves into my house, and particularly into my kitchen, to poison the dishes prepared for my table. I never received any answer to this letter. After this I was obliged to go into Germany, to visit my relative the margravine of Baden, and the margravine of Bareuth. The shortest road for my return to Italy was through Vienna, and I took that road with flattering hope that the emperor would protect me. Arrived at Vienna, I demanded public satisfaction for the public insult I had experienced in Lombardy; this was refused me, and a new insult was offered. The emperor refused to meet me, or to accept my visit. Lord Stewart, the English ambassador, having received a letter from me, informing him of my intention of returning by Vienna, and of taking possession of his house there (as it is the custom for foreign ambassadors to receive their princesses into their houses, when travelling), absolutely refused me his house, left the town, and retired into the country. Lord Stewart afterwards wrote a very impertinent letter to me, which is now in Mr. Canning's hands, as I sent it to England. Finding the Austrian government so much influenced by the English ministers, I sold my villa on the Lake of Como, and settled myself quietly in the Roman estates. I there met with great civility for some time, and protection against the spy, Mr. Ompteda; but from the moment I became queen of England all civility ceased. Cardinal Gonsalva has been much influenced since that period by the baron de Rydan, the Hanoverian minister, who succeeded Mr. Ompteda, deceased. The baron de Rydan has taken an oath never to acknowledge me as queen of England, and persuades every person to call me

Caroline of Brunswick. A guard has been refused me as queen, which was granted to me as princess of Wales, because no communication has been received from the British government announcing me as queen. My messenger was refused a passport for England. I also experienced much insult from the court of Turin. Last year, in the month of September (I was then travelling *incognito*, under the name of the countess of Oldi), I went to the confines of the Austrian estates, to the first small town belonging to the king of Sardinia, in my way to meet Mr. Brougham, at Lyons, as the direct road lay through Turin. I wrote myself to the queen of Sardinia, informing her that I could not remain at Turin, being anxious to reach Lyons as soon as possible, and also that I was travelling *incognito*. I received no answer to this letter. The post-master at Bronio, the small post town near the country villa where I then resided, absolutely refused me post horses. In consequence of this refusal I wrote to Mr. Hill, the English minister at Turin, demanding immediate satisfaction, and the reason for such an insult. Mr. Hill excused himself upon the plea of its being a misunderstanding, and told me that post horses would be in readiness whenever I should require them. I accordingly set out, and arranged to go through the town of Turin at night, and only stop to change horses; but I received positive orders not to go through the town, but to proceed by a very circuitous road, which obliged me to travel almost the whole night, in very dangerous roads, and prevented me from reaching the post town (where I should have passed the night) till five in the morning, when, by going through Turin, I might have reached it by ten o'clock at night. Finding so much difficulty attending my travelling, I thought the most proper mode for me to pursue would be to acquaint the high personages of my intention of passing the winter at Lyons, or in the neighbourhood of Lyons, previous to my intended return to England in the spring. I addressed a letter to the French minister for foreign affairs, informing him of my intentions, and also that I wished to preserve the strictest *incognito*. No notice was taken of this letter; and one addressed to the prefect of Lyons met with like contempt. In fact, from the 7th of October to the 26th of January, the day I embarked from Toulon for Leghorn, I received so much insult from the governors and prefect, that I almost considered my life in danger, unprotected as I then was, in such a country. Another motive induced me to leave it. Mr. Brougham could not fix the period for meeting me anywhere in France. I have written to lord Liverpool and lord Castlereagh, demanding to have my name inserted in the liturgy of the church of England, and that orders be given to all British ambassadors, ministers, and consuls, that I should be received and acknowledged as the queen of England; and after the speech made by lord Castlereagh in the house of commons, in answer to Mr. Brougham, I do not expect to experience further insult. I have also demanded that a palace may be prepared for my reception. England is my real home, to which I shall immediately fly. I have dismissed my Italian court, retaining only a sufficient number of persons to conduct me in England; and if Buckingham house,

Marlborough house, or any other palace is refused me, I shall take a house in the country, till my friends can find a palace for me in London. I have sent a messenger to England to make the proper arrangements for that purpose."

The queen feelingly alludes to the same subject in her reply to the address from Westminster, presented by its representatives, Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Hobhouse. She said :—

"It is now seven years since I received an address from the inhabitant householders of Westminster, in which they congratulated me upon my escape from what they truly described as a nefarious conspiracy against my honour and my life. Upon that occasion my character was exonerated from the load of calumny with which it had been oppressed, though my conduct had undergone only an *ex-parte* examination, and though I had no means of facing my accusers, or of being heard in my defence.

"The people of England then, almost universally, expressed their approbation of what they considered as the triumph of rectitude and innocence over perfidy and falsehood. From that hour to the present I have been the victim of a similar conspiracy, which has been incited by the same motives, and prosecuted with the same views; though with increased violence,* and with aggravated malignity. New and more appalling efforts have been made to destroy that character which had resisted so many former attempts; but I rejoice that I now find, as I at the time found, the people of Westminster uninfluenced by the powerful machinations of my enemies, and animated by the same sentiment which they then expressed, that every subject, until convicted of guilt, had an undoubted right to retain the reputation, the rights, and immunities of innocence.

"In the present perilous crisis of my fate, I am supported by that courage which arises from the consciousness of rectitude; and I feel that the English people will never suffer an injured queen to appeal in vain either to their justice or to their humanity. I am convinced that, in this land of liberty, no oppression can be practised, and that to be upright is to be secure.

"In the warm desire which the people of Westminster have expressed for the consideration of my honour, they have exhibited a striking testimony of their loyalty to the king; for the honour of his majesty must for ever be identified with that of his queen.

"My first wish is to prove that my character has been unjustly traduced; my next is to terminate my days among the high-minded people of this country, to whose affectionate sympathy I am, at present, indebted for so much of the cheerfulness which I feel, and of the support which I possess, under the pressure of such complicated wrongs, and such accumulated persecutions."

In a letter which she addressed to the king himself, on the 20th of August, she urged the same topic with great force. Alluding to the separation, she said :—

"A sense of what is due to my character and sex forbids me to refer minutely to the real causes of our domestic separation, or to the numerous unmerited insults offered me previously to that period; but, leaving to your majesty

to reconcile with the marriage vow the act of driving by such means a wife from beneath your roof, with an infant in her arms, your majesty will permit me to remind you that that act was entirely your own; that the separation, so far from being sought for by me, was a sentence pronounced upon me, without any cause assigned other than that of your own inclinations, which, as your majesty was pleased to allege, were not under your control."

In reference to his promise that she should have a tranquil and comfortable home, she proceeded:—

"But, alas! even tranquillity and comfort were too much for me to enjoy. From the very threshold of your majesty's mansion the mother of your child was pursued by spies, conspirators, and traitors, employed, encouraged, and rewarded, to lay snares for the feet, and to plot against the reputation and life of her whom your majesty had so recently and so solemnly vowed to honour, to love, and to cherish.

"In withdrawing from the embraces of my parents, in giving my hand to the son of George III., and the heir apparent to the British throne, nothing less than a voice from heaven would have made me fear injustice or wrong of any kind. What, then, was my astonishment at finding that treasons against me had been carried on and matured, perjuries against me had been methodised and embodied, a secret tribunal had been held, a trial of my actions had taken place, and a decision had been made upon those actions, without my having been informed of the nature of the charge, or of the names of the witnesses? And what words can express the feelings excited by the fact, that this proceeding was founded on a request made, and on evidence furnished, by order of the father of my child, and my natural as well as legal guardian and protector?

"Notwithstanding, however, the unprecedented conduct of that tribunal—conduct which has since undergone, even in parliament, severe and unanswered animadversions, and which has been also censured in minutes of the privy council—notwithstanding the secrecy of the proceedings of this tribunal—notwithstanding the strong temptation to the giving of false evidence against me before it—notwithstanding that there was no opportunity afforded me of rebutting that evidence—notwithstanding all these circumstances, so decidedly favourable to my enemies—even this secret tribunal acquitted me of all crime, and thereby pronounced my principal accusers to have been guilty of the grossest perjury. But it was now (after the trial was over) discovered that the nature of the tribunal was such as to render false swearing before it *not legally criminal*! And thus, at the suggestion and request of your majesty, had been created, to take cognisance of, and try my conduct, a tribunal, competent to administer oaths, competent to examine witnesses on oath, competent to try, competent to acquit or condemn, and competent, moreover, to screen those who had sworn falsely against me from suffering the pains and penalties which the law awards to wilful and corrupt perjury. Great as my indignation naturally must have been at this shameful evasion of law and justice, that indignation was lost in pity for him who could lower his princely plumes to the

dust, by giving his countenance and favour to the most conspicuous of those abandoned and notorious perjurers.

"Still there was one whose upright mind nothing could warp, in whose breast injustice never found a place, and whose hand was always ready to raise the unfortunate, and to rescue the oppressed. While that good and gracious father and sovereign remained in the exercise of his royal functions, his unoffending daughter-in-law had nothing to fear. As long as the protecting hand of your late ever beloved and ever lamented father was held over me, I was safe. But the melancholy event which deprived the nation of the active exertions of its virtuous king, bereft me of my friend and protector, and of all hope of future tranquillity and safety. To calumniate your innocent wife was now the shortest road to royal favour; and to betray her was to lay the sure foundation to boundless riches and titles of honour. Before claims like these, talent, virtue, long services, your own personal friendships, your royal engagements, promises, and pledges, written as well as verbal, melted into air. Your cabinet was founded on this basis. You took to your councils men of whose persons, as well as whose principles, you had invariably expressed the strongest dislike. The interest of the nation, and even your own feelings, in all other respects, were sacrificed to the gratification of your desire to aggravate my sufferings and insure my humiliation. You took to your councils and your bosom men whom you hated, whose abandonment of and whose readiness to sacrifice me were their only merits, and whose power has been exercised in a manner, and has been attended with consequences, worthy of its origin. From this unprincipled and unnatural union have sprung the manifold evils which this nation has now to endure, and which present a mass of misery and of degradation, accompanied with acts of tyranny and cruelty, rather than have seen which inflicted on his industrious, faithful, and brave people, your royal father would have perished at the head of that people.

"When to calumniate, revile, and betray me became the sure path to honour and riches, it would have been strange, indeed, if calumniators, revilers, and traitors had not abounded. Your court became much less a scene of polished manners and refined intercourse than of low intrigue and scurrility. Spies, bacchanalian tale-bearers, and foul conspirators swarmed in those places which had been before the resort of sobriety, virtue, and honour. To enumerate all the various privations and mortifications which I had to endure, all the insults that were wantonly heaped upon me, from the day of your elevation to the regency to that of my departure for the continent, would be to describe every species of personal offence that can be offered to, and every pain short of bodily violence that can be inflicted on, any human being. Bereft of parent, brother, and father-in-law, and my husband for my deadliest foe—seeing those who have promised me support bought by rewards to be amongst my enemies—restrained from accusing my foes in the face of the world, out of regard for the character of the father of my child, and from a desire to prevent her happiness from being disturbed—shunned, from motives of selfishness, by those who were my natural associates—living in obscurity, while

I ought to have been the centre of all that was splendid: thus humbled, I had one consolation left—the love of my dear and only child. To permit me to enjoy this was too great an indulgence. To see my daughter, to fold her in my arms, to mingle my tears with hers, to receive her cheering caresses, and to hear from her lips assurances of never-ceasing love—thus to be comforted, consoled, upheld, and blessed, was too much to be allowed me. Even on the slave-mart the cries of ‘Oh, my mother! my mother! oh, my child!’ have prevented a separation of the victims of avarice. But your advisers, more inhuman than the slave-dealers, remorselessly tore the mother from the child.

“Thus bereft of the society of my child, or reduced to the necessity of embittering her life by struggles to preserve that society, I resolved on a temporary absence, in the hope that time might restore me to her in happier days. Those days, alas! were never to come. To mothers, and those mothers who have been suddenly bereft of the best and most affectionate and only daughter, it belongs to estimate my sufferings and my wrongs. Such mothers will judge of my affliction upon hearing of the death of my child, and upon my calling to recollection the last look, the last words, and all the affecting circumstances of our separation. Such mothers will see the depth of my sorrows. Every being, with a heart of humanity in his bosom, will drop a tear in sympathy with me. And will not the world, then, learn with indignation that this event, calculated to soften the hardest heart, was the signal for new conspiracies and indefatigable efforts for the destruction of this afflicted mother? Your majesty had torn my child from me; you had deprived me of the power of being at hand to succour her; you had taken from me the possibility of hearing of her last prayers for her mother; you saw me bereft, forlorn, and broken-hearted; and this was the moment you chose for redoubling your persecutions.

“Let the world pass its judgment on the constituting of a commission, in a foreign country, consisting of inquisitors, spies, and informers, to discover, collect, and arrange matters of accusation against your wife, without any complaint having been communicated to her; let the world judge of the employment of ambassadors in such a business, and of the enlisting of foreign courts in the enterprise; but on the measures which have been adopted to give final effect to these preliminary proceedings, it is for me to speak, it is for me to remonstrate with your majesty it is for me to protest, it is for me to apprise you of my determination.”

The conduct of lord Eldon, as president of the august court, is admitted to have been dignified, if not wholly impartial. The summing up in his speech on the second reading was very able. He said:—“But, my lords, the ground of the opinion which I am about to state to your lordships is this:—Laying aside all the testimony in this case which can by possibility be suspected, I ask myself this question—Does the unsuspected evidence which has been produced in support of this bill, and does the testimony which has been produced in reply, together with the negative evidence or the want of that evidence which might have been

produced in reply—I say again, laying aside all evidence liable to suspicion, or which has been contradicted, does the unimpeached testimony which has been produced on the one side—connected with the positive testimony and the negative testimony, or want of evidence which might have been produced on the other—support the allegation of an adulterous intercourse, or does it not?

“The course which I shall take is of this nature; and I am now about to state the opinion which, after the most painful and anxious attention, that course compels me to form. I apprehend, then—at least, my lords, so it seems to me—that if we look at one or two of the cases or circumstances which have been proved at your lordships’ bar by witnesses entirely beyond suspicion, to whom suspicion has never attached during the whole of these proceedings; and if we then look at the situation and history of the person with whom the act of adultery is alleged to have been committed, it appears to me, from this view of the subject—I am very sorry to say it, but I cannot shrink from the duty of saying it—that we cannot possibly draw any other inference but that there has been an adulterous intercourse.

“My lords, with respect to the negative evidence of the bill—the want of contradiction to the evidence in support of the bill—it is my duty to say that I have frequently thought more effect has been given than ought to have been given in what is called the summing-up of a judge on a trial, to the fact that there has not been the contradiction on the part of the defence, which it is supposed the witnesses for the accusation might have received; for, my lords, we ought to look at the circumstances of the case in which this absence of contradiction occurs. It may often happen that, in the course of a trial, circumstances are proved which have no bearing on the real question at issue; and it may also happen that facts are alleged and sworn to by witnesses which it is impossible for the accused party to contradict; circumstances may be stated by witnesses which are untrue, yet they cannot be contradicted, because the party injured by them, not expecting that that which never had any existence would be attempted to be proved, cannot be prepared with opposing witnesses. So, also, in cases in which an individual witness speaks to occurrences at which no other person was present but himself, there it may be absolutely impossible to contradict him. But, my lords, in a case in which the facts sworn to by a witness are sworn to have occurred in the presence of many individuals (which we know to be the case in the present instance) who are within the reach of the party whose interest it is to contradict such testimony, are not produced, then the want of that contradiction becomes a matter of great importance, and for many reasons. I have no right to impute to any man that he has given false or perjured testimony when other persons were present at the period to which his testimony refers, whom I have the power to call, but whom I decline calling. Unless I call those persons to contradict the witness, he is clearly entitled to credit. In my opinion, such a circumstance is a tacit admission of the fact by those whose interest it is to contest and deny it. If they do not contradict the fact by testimony which they

have the means of producing, they tacitly admit that it is incapable of contradiction. The party who declines to avail himself of such an opportunity of disproving the evidence on the other side, so far from being entitled to impugn that evidence, confers additional credit upon the testimony which he thus leaves uncontradicted."

Lord Eldon then entered into an examination of the evidence upon this case in its principal points, and, having stated them in outline, he concluded thus:—"Such, my lords, is the view in which I regard this great question. There are many points of the case to which I have not alluded, and to which I do not intend to allude. But taking into my consideration all that has been sworn by unimpeached and uncontradicted witnesses; adverting to what passed, both while her majesty was on board the *Palacre*, and before and after that period at *Aum*, the *Barona*, the *Villa d'Este*, *Carlsruhe*, *Catania*, and elsewhere; referring to the various acts of familiarity which have been proved, and which there has been no attempt to

have happened, or whatever may happen, I will perform my duty here. But, in the course of this solemn inquiry, your lordships have heard from the bar of this house what I was very sorry to hear, and what I believe was never before addressed to a court of justice. Something like a threat was held out to your lordships, that if you passed judgment against the queen you would never have the power of passing on another judgment. I do not profess to use the words of the speaker, but the impression is distinct upon my mind. My lords, however that may be, I will take upon myself to declare that an address of such a nature, such an address of intimidation to any court of justice, was never until this hour considered to be the duty of an advocate; and that such an address, whether an advocate has a right to make it or not, ought to have no effect on your lordships. You stand here as the great and acknowledged protectors of the liberties, the character, the honour, and the lives of your fellow subjects, and you cannot discharge that high trust a moment longer than



GREAT SEAL OF GEORGE IV.



deny; and recollecting the rapid and extraordinary promotion of this man and his family, and their having been all brought about her majesty's person, with the exception of his wife, I cannot withdraw myself from what appears to me to be an imperative duty, namely, to express my firm belief that an adulterous intercourse has taken place. I express that opinion because the positive act of adultery has not been seen, and could not have been seen. It is the language of the law that if the circumstances are such that a reasonable and plain man, addressing his mind dispassionately to the consideration of those circumstances, and to the principles of conduct by which human nature is governed, cannot but infer the commission of the crime, it is sufficient, although the absolute fact itself has not been proved. Of the maxims of law, as to legal presumption, I am sure. Whether or not your lordships think that such a case as that which I have described has been made out, is another question.

"As to what has passed, and is passing out of doors, I will take no notice of it, for I am not supposed to hear it, or to know anything about it; only this I will say, that whatever

while you can say to one another—and for myself, if I had not a moment longer to live, I would say to you—"Be just and fear not!"

"My lords, I know the people of this country. I am sure that if your lordships do your duty to them, by preserving their liberties and the constitution which has been handed down to you from your ancestors, the time is not far distant when they will do their duty to you; and they will acknowledge that those who are invested with the great judicial functions of the state, ought firmly to meet all the reproaches to which the faithful performance of those functions may expose them; to court no popularity; to do their duty, and to leave the consequences to the wisdom and justice of God, who guides the feelings and actions of men, and directs the course and consequences of all human affairs. My lords, I have shortly stated my opinion, and the grounds of it. Having thus discharged my individual duty, it is for your lordships to declare what it is your pleasure to do with the bill before us."

The case against the queen closed on the 7th of September. An adjournment took place to allow time for the preparation of her defence, which was opened on the 3rd of October by Mr. Brougham, in a magnificent oration, justly celebrated as one of the finest specimens of British forensic eloquence. It concluded as follows:—

"It was always," said Mr. Brougham, "the queen's sad fate to lose her best stay, her strongest and surest protection, when danger threatened her; and by a coincidence most miraculous in her eventful history, not one of her intrepid defenders was ever withdrawn from her without that loss being the immediate signal for the

dreadful loss the murmuring of that storm which was so soon to burst with all its tempestuous fury upon her hapless and devoted head. Her child still lived, and was her friend; her enemies were afraid to strike, for they, in the wisdom of the world, worshipped the rising sun. But when she lost that amiable and beloved daughter, she had no protector; her enemies had nothing to dread; innocent or guilty, there was no hope, and she yielded to the entreaty of those who advised her residence out of this country. Who, indeed, could love persecution so steadfastly, as to stay and brave its renewal and continuance, and harass the feelings of the only one she loved so dearly,



MR. (AFTERWARDS LORD) DENMAN.

renewal of momentous attacks upon her honour and her life. Mr. Pitt, who had been her constant friend and protector, died in 1806. A few weeks after that event took place, the first attack was levelled at her. Mr. Pitt left her as a legacy to Mr. Percival, who became her best, her most undaunted, her firmest protector. But no sooner had the hand of an assassin laid prostrate that minister, than her royal highness felt the force of the blow, by the commencement of a renewed attack, though she had but just been borne through the last by Mr. Percival's skilful and powerful defence of her character. Mr. Whitbread then undertook her protection; but soon that melancholy catastrophe happened, which all good men of every political party in the state, he believed, sincerely and universally lamented. Then came with Mr. Whitbread's

by combating such repeated attacks, which were still reiterated after the echo of the fullest acquittal? It was, however, reserved for the Milan commission to concentrate and condense all the threatening clouds which were prepared to burst over her ill-fated head; and as if it were utterly impossible that the queen could lose a single protector without the loss being instantaneously followed by the commencement of some important step against her, the same day which saw the remains of her venerable sovereign entombed—of that beloved sovereign who was, from the outset, her constant father and friend—that same sun which shone upon the monarch's tomb ushered into the palace of his illustrious son and successor one of the perjured witnesses who were brought over to depose against her majesty's life. . . .

"Such, my lords," continued Mr. Brougham, "is the case now before you; and such is the evidence by which it is attempted to be upheld. It is evidence inadequate to prove any proposition, impotent to deprive the subject of any civil right, ridiculous to establish the least offence, scandalous to support a charge of the highest nature, monstrous to ruin the honour of the queen of England. What shall I say of it, then, as evidence to support a judicial act of legislature—an *ex post-facto* law? My lords, I call upon you to pause. You stand on the brink of a precipice: if your judgment shall go out against the queen, it will be the only act that ever went out without effecting its purpose; it will return to you upon your heads. Save the country! save yourselves!

"Oh! rescue the country—save the people of whom you are the ornaments, but severed from whom you can no more live than the blossom that is severed from the root and tree on which it grows. Save the country, therefore, that you may continue to adorn it; save the crown, which is threatened with irreparable injury; save the aristocracy, which is surrounded with danger; save the altar, which is no longer safe when its kindred throne is shaken. You see that when the church and the throne would allow of no church solemnity, in behalf of the queen, the heartfelt prayers of the people rose to Heaven for her protection. I pray Heaven for her; and here I pour forth my fervent supplications at the Throne of Mercy, that mercies may descend on the people of the country, higher than their rulers have deserved, and that your hearts may be turned to justice."

"Such," says Sir A. Alison, "was the effect of this splendid speech, and such the apprehensions felt in a large part of the house of peers of the hourly increasing agitation out of doors, that it is generally thought by those best acquainted with the feelings of that assembly, that, if the vote had been taken at that moment, the queen would have been entirely acquitted. Mr. Brougham himself intended to have done this, after having merely presented her maid, Mariette Bron, for examination, but she was not to be found, and the case went on, with most able arguments by Mr. Denman and Mr. Williams."*

The examination of the witnesses for the defence continued till the 24th of October. The first witness produced was Mr. Leman, a clerk in the service of the queen's solicitor. He had been sent to Baden to request the attendance of baron Dante, the grand duke's chamberlain. His testimony was important, as showing that the baron had kept notes of certain transactions connected with the queen. Why had he done so, if not for the purpose of making out a case against her? And why was he not produced as a witness on the trial? The grand duke, it was alleged, would not allow him to come; but, if his memoranda had been thought damaging to the accused, the same influence that set in motion all the continental courts for the purpose of overwhelming the queen with proofs of guilt, would have been made available here also. Colonel St. Leger, the next witness, proved that he had not resigned his situation in the queen's household

because he disapproved of what was going on there—as had been alleged—but solely from ill health. The earl of Guildford bore testimony to the general propriety of the queen's conduct; nor did he observe anything unbecoming or presuming in the conduct of Bergami. Lord Glenbervie deposed that that person behaved as a respectful servant while attending at table. He also stated that he had consented that lady Glenbervie should act as lady in waiting till another arrived; which no English gentleman would do if the stories of the Italian witnesses were true, and the queen were living in the immoral way they described. Lady Charlotte Lindsay, who had been lady in waiting to her majesty for a length of time, had heard unfavourable reports; but she declared that she had herself seen nothing to confirm or justify them. William Carrington was produced to show a motive of spite for the evidence of Majocchi. Siccard, a cook, gave evidence strongly in favour of his royal mistress. The next witness, Dr. Holland, the queen's physician, who had the best opportunities of observing, gave evidence more favourable than any of those yet examined. His answers were exact, decisive, and to the purpose. The testimony of Mr. Charles Mills was very important as clearing up the mystery about Bergami being in the Queen's bed-room, which strikes English minds as so improper. He proved that it was the custom of French and Italian ladies of respectability to receive visitors in their bed-rooms. The foreign witnesses would, therefore, never have noticed this as an impropriety on the part of the princess of Wales, if they had not been prompted by the Milan commissioners and their jackals, who had given out that money to any amount, and valuable situations in England, might be earned by those who could swear to damnable facts against the queen. Colonel Theoline bore testimony highly favourable to Bergami's conduct and character. The earl of Llandaff, who had travelled on the continent with his wife and family, confirmed the previous evidence, with regard to the custom of Italian ladies receiving gentlemen in their bed-rooms.

The honourable Keppel Craven gave testimony still more decidedly in favour of Bergami, stating that he had been particularly recommended by the marquis Picco, who respected his family, which had been reduced from a much better position in society. He also contradicted the flippant witness, mademoiselle Dumont, with regard to the dresses worn by the princess at the masquerade. Sir William Gell also bore witness to the former respectability of Bergami's family. Sir William was one of the queen's chamberlains, a most estimable and honourable man, and of his truthfulness there cannot be a shadow of doubt. An intelligent spectator, who heard his evidence, wrote emphatically, "If Sir William Gell spoke truth, the queen is an innocent woman." A man named Whitcomb, the valet of Mr. Craven, swore that, to his own knowledge, mademoiselle Dumont was a person of bad character.

A difference has been noticed between the manner of the witnesses for the prosecution and the witnesses for the defence. The first told improbable stories; for nothing could be more unlikely than that the princess should have acted in the shameless and reckless manner which they

* "History of Europe," vol. ii., p. 465.

described. In the second place, it was evident to any close observer of human nature, that they did not speak from the personal recollection of facts and scenes observed, but from imagination; consequently, they were as little affected by what they described as if they had been contemplating a mathematical point. This remark applies particularly to the testimony of mademoiselle Dumont.

A cabinet courier, named Forte, who had been in the employment of the viceroy of Italy, gave testimony, which took away the foundation from a large mass of the evidence against the queen. He gave an explanation of the French and Italian custom with regard to servants kissing their mistresses' hands, which so shocked the sense of propriety and the moral feeling of the English. He admitted that he had seen Bergami kiss the queen's hand on taking leave; but that was the Italian custom, and he had himself done so, both to the queen and the empress Josephine. Lieutenant Flynn and lieutenant Hownan proved nothing of importance. Mr. Granville Sharp was examined to prove that the Moorish dance was not the indecent thing that had been represented. Guzziare was produced to prove the physical impossibility of one of the witnesses seeing the criminal act to which he had deposed.

During the examination of this witness a fact transpired which proved a heavy blow to the prosecution. Rastelli had been an important witness against the queen. In consequence of something said by Guzziare, it was resolved to recall him for further examination, when the startling discovery was made that he had been sent out of the country, under the idle pretence of his having been wanted by some person at Milan. The significance of this fact was fully appreciated by the public. "The plate of earth and salt on the bosom of a corpse in a Scottish cottage is not a more emphatic monument of death than mystery is of regal iniquity." The reason of his disappearance came out on the examination of the next witness, one Pomi, who deposed that he had offered him money. Vilmarcati, an Italian advocate, had been associated with colonel Browne in scraping up evidence for the Milan commission. They bribed a person named Pomarti to give up certain documents with which he had been confidentially intrusted, and for betraying which he expressed the deepest remorse. A milliner named Martini stated that she once grievously offended mademoiselle Dumont, by speaking to her of the reports she had heard concerning the princess of Wales and Bergami.

The evidence for the defence having concluded, powerful speeches were delivered by the attorney-general, sir Robert Gifford, and by the solicitor-general, Mr. Copley. The speech of the former was considered so effective, that William Cobbett threw off one hundred thousand copies of an answer to it. Sir Archibald Alison, the tory historian, admits that it was not the evidence for the prosecution that told against the queen, "for it was of so suspicious a kind that little reliance could be placed on it, but what was elicited on cross-examination, from the English officers on board the vessel which conveyed her majesty to the Levant—men of integrity and honour, of whose testimony there was not a shadow of suspicion. Without asserting that any of them proved actual guilt

against her majesty, it cannot be disputed that they established against her an amount of levity of manner and laxity of habits, which rendered her unfit to be at the head of English society, and amply justified the measures taken to exclude her from it."*

Mr. Twiss, in an apologetic strain, says: "The trial, when at length resolved on, was a step taken, not, as was alleged, for the final destruction of a long persecuted victim, but for the defence of the country against claims which, while the charges remained unanswered, *could not* decently be granted, and the ministers who, at an earlier period, had rightly declined to take any steps against her for the mere satisfaction of the thing, no less rightly refused to connive at the triumph which she was seeking by violence and agitation to achieve, at the expense not only of the king, her consort, but of the crown, the constitution, and the state. Heavy blame, undoubtedly, there was upon the side opposed to her; but it lay not with the administration, who reluctantly and unavoidably instituted the trial, but with him whose original maltreatment of her had induced, and did assuredly go far to extenuate, whatever indiscretions and errors she afterwards committed."†

If the ministers were influenced by considerations of morality and decency, they should, with much more reason, have declined to have anything to do with the coronation of the king, who was incomparably the greater and more scandalous sinner of the two. They could have resigned, as Mr. Canning did, like an honourable man. It was much more incumbent upon lord Eldon than upon him to act in this manner. For when he was the queen's confidential adviser, he was a party to the preparation and intended publication of "the book," which consisted of documents, vindicating the character of the princess of Wales, and seriously aspersing the character of her royal consort. It was printed in a private press, in the house of Mr. Perceval, on the west side of Lincoln's Inn Fields. Lady Hester Stanhope, in a conversation with her physician, in the year 1837, referring to this subject, said:—"I prevented the explosion the first time, and I will tell you how. One day the duke of Cumberland called on me, and, in his accustomed manner, began, 'Well, lady Hester, it will be all out to-morrow. We have printed it, and to-morrow it will be all out.' I knew what he meant, and said to him, 'Have you got the chancellor's leave? I, for my part, don't like the business at all.' 'Why don't you like it?' asked the duke. 'Because,' answered I, 'I have too much respect for royalty to desire to see it made a subject for Grub Street songs.' I did not say this so much on the prince of Wales's account as for the sake of the princess. I dreaded the *other* disclosures to which a business like this might lead. The duke turned away, and I saw that the same idea struck him; for, after a pause, he resumed his position, and answered, 'You are quite right, lady Hester; by —, you are quite right; but what am I to do? We are gone too far. What am I to do?' 'Why, I think,' rejoined I, 'the best thing you can do is to ask the chancellor.'" Lady Hester after-

* "History of Europe," vol. ii., p. 446.

† "Life of Eldon," vol. ii., p. 406.

wards states that Mr. Perceval gave ten thousand pounds out of the secret service money for a single copy of the book that had been stolen from his table. Some copies, however, got into circulation surreptitiously, and the *Phoenix*, a Sunday newspaper, announced the publication of the book in its columns. The attorney-general filed an information in the Court of Chancery, praying that the publication might be prevented, and that, by a decree, the proprietor of the journal might be required to give up the book. The injunction was granted, and a singular fact connected with this strange business was, that the injunction was granted by lord Eldon, one of the authors of the book, which he intended for general circulation, with the view of blackening the character of the prince of Wales, and damaging the whig leaders by whom he was surrounded. Although the book was suppressed, the princess was received at court, and continued to be treated with great kindness and respect by lord Eldon and his colleagues, because the old king was her friend. But when her husband, whose conduct they had reprobated, became king, and was very gracious to lord Eldon, the latter gentleman gallantly cut the connection with his former royal *protégé*, and zealously assisted her immaculate consort to degrade and ruin her, because, forsooth, her character was not sufficiently pure to be at the head of the society which his character so admirably adorned!

On the 6th of November the second reading of the bill was carried by a majority of twenty-eight, the numbers being one hundred and twenty-three to ninety-five, which the government considered equivalent to a finding of guilty. It appears from these numbers that a large proportion of their lordships abstained from voting. The bishops had an insuperable objection to the divorce clause; but in committee it was sustained by a majority of one hundred and twenty-nine to sixty-two, the opposition having nearly all voted for the clause, with a view of defeating the bill in its last stage. Consequently, for the third reading, on the 10th of November, the majority was only nine, the numbers being one hundred and eight to ninety-nine. Upon this announcement lord Liverpool rose and said, that upon so slender a majority he could not think of pressing the measure further, and so he begged leave to withdraw the bill. The truth is, he had no option. It had not the slightest chance of passing through the lower house, where ignominious defeat awaited the government.

The intelligence of this result was received by the public with transports of joy. A person who was present gives a very graphic and touching description of the scene when the *finale* was announced. He says:—"No occurrence where I was only a spectator ever affected me so much. I shall never forget what was my emotion when it was announced to me that the bill of pains and penalties was to be abandoned. I was walking towards the west end of the long corridor of the house of lords, wrapped in reverie, when one of the door-keepers touched me on the shoulder and told me the news. I turned instantly to go back into the house, when I met the queen coming out alone from her waiting-room, preceded by an

usher. She had been there unknown to me. I stopped involuntarily; I could not proceed, for she had a 'dazed' look, more tragical than consternation; she passed me. The usher pushed open the folding doors of the great staircase; she began to descend, and I followed instinctively two or three steps behind her. She was evidently all shuddering, and she took hold of the banisters, pausing for a moment. Oh, that sudden clutch with which she caught the railing! Never say again to me that any actor can feel like a principal. Four or five persons came in from below before she reached the bottom of the stairs. I think alderman Wood was one of them; but I was in indescribable confusion—the great globe itself seemed shaking under me! I rushed past, and out into the hastily assembling crowd. I knew not where I was, but in a moment a shouting in the balcony above, on which a number of gentlemen from the interior of the house were gathered, roused me. The multitude then began to cheer. Every one instantly, between Charing Cross and Whitehall, turned and came rushing down, filling Old and New Palace Yards, as if a deluge was unsluiced. The generous exultation and hurry of the people were beyond all description; it was a conflagration of hearts.*"

London was illuminated for three successive nights; Edinburgh, Dublin, Manchester, Liverpool, and all the great towns followed the example. "For several days," says Alison, "the populace in all the cities of the empire seemed to be delirious with joy. Nothing had been seen like it before since the battle of Waterloo; nothing approaching to it after since the reform bill was passed." Meetings were immediately called in every direction to present addresses both to the king and queen: to the former, to congratulate him on the escape of his illustrious consort, and to call upon him to dismiss his present ministers; and to the latter, to felicitate her on the restoration of those dignities from which she had been so long excluded. Not only public meetings of citizens and civic bodies, but trades of all kinds assembled and adopted addresses expressing their exultation at her triumph, and tendering their homage.

The members of the government were scarcely less rejoiced at getting rid of the matter than the nation was at their defeat. The most thinking men of their party became greatly alarmed at the state of public feeling, and were in constant dread of a revolution. The most violent language was used by the democratic leaders, and the press abounded with libels against the government, whose chief members were hooted and pelted as they passed through the streets. This alarming state of things had arrived at its height towards the end of September. The duke of York, who was then at Brighton, was violent against the queen. He felt confident that the troops must be called out, and he thought he could trust them. On them alone he depended for the preservation of the throne. The king, at this time, rarely showed himself to any of his subjects. His conduct was an excitement to popular hatred. Mr. W. H. Freemantle, who was well informed as to all that was going forward in the highest

* "Diary of the Times of George IV.," vol. ii, pp. 392-5.

quarters, describes the state of things in letters to the marquis of Buckingham. "You have no idea," he says, "of the state of the town. The funds fell to-day. As to the king forming a government, after the resignation of all his present servants, with the avowed object of persecuting the queen, it would be impossible; it would be making her the popular object, and throwing the country in a flame. Be assured that the king on this subject is no less than mad!" "In the months of October and November," observes the duke of Buckingham, "it became evident that the frenzy outside the houses of parliament was exerting its influence within its walls. The aspect of affairs looked blacker every hour." "Matters here are in a critical state," writes lord Sidmouth to Mr. Bathurst, on the 27th of October. "Fear and faction are actively and not unsuccessfully at work; and it is possible that we may be in a minority, and that the fate of the government may be decided." Plumer Ward, in his diary, has this entry, under date of November 2nd:—"Called upon (Wellesley) Pole. He was at breakfast, and we had a long chat. He thought everything very bad—ministers, opposition, king, queen, country—and, what was more, no prospect of getting right. All ties were loosened. Insolence and insubordination out of doors; weakness and wickedness within. 'The whigs,' he said, 'were already half radicals, and would be entirely so, if we did not give way.' I said his brother, the duke of Wellington, felt this too, but would not give way nevertheless. Meantime, the king was as merry as a grig. At first he had been annoyed, but was now enjoying himself at Brighton."*

The duke of Wellington was delighted with the abandonment of the bill. "Well," said he, "we have done exceedingly well, and have avoided all sorts of mischief, I think, with safety and without dishonour. The votes put the question of guilt or innocence out of doubt. The withdrawing is founded on mere expediency, and has nothing to do with the verdict. Had we given up before the third reading, it would have been different."

The king, however, was not at all pleased with the issue; he was angry with his ministers for not complying with his orders, and abused both lords Liverpool and Castlereagh. Mr. W. H. Freemantle dined with him at the princess Augusta's, Frogmore. Writing to lord Buckingham, he says:—"Previous to dinner, I thought his majesty looked dreadfully dejected and thoughtful, but when he had dined (professing to have no appetite), and ate as much as would serve me for three days of fish, but no meat, together with a bottle of strong punch, he was in much better spirits, and vastly agreeable. There were only six people, four of which were ladies. He did not sit a quarter of an hour after they left us, and, excepting talking a little on the indecent behaviour of the *mountain* in the house of commons, and telling an anecdote or two of the women who went up with addresses to the queen, not a word was said of politics."†

Lord Eldon was well pleased with the part he played in this prosecution, but he felt greatly mortified at its abortive

result, complaining bitterly of a "deadly want of energy," not only in the public but in the administration. If he had his will, he would have gone through with the business, and carried the queen's divorce. We must not, however, ascribe this to an abstract love of justice or hatred of vice, or to zeal for the national honour. It is to be attributed chiefly to his desire to gratify his royal master, and give effect to his despotic will. "The king may be false," he said, "but he has told me twenty times, and within these forty-eight hours once, that he will take no ministry that will introduce her into the liturgy. I have no reason to believe that the king has sent for lord Spencer."* Lord Eldon flattered himself that the precedent which he established with respect to evidence in such a proceeding, by confining it strictly to the rules observed in courts of justice, and putting questions to the judges as occasion required, might be said to have rendered the trial "a useful proceeding." His biographer differs from him in this. "For surely," says Mr. Twiss, "except as to this one technical and comparatively unimportant result, the whole investigation deserves to be accounted—as the people of England have generally accounted it—among the most unfortunate passages of our domestic history. It was a procedure not only productive of great discredit to the two personages most immediately concerned, but prejudicial to the interests of monarchy itself; injurious to private decorum, which was startled by the grossness of the facts disclosed in the evidence; and degrading to public justice, whose general principles were borne down by the unpopularity of this particular investigation."†

The duke of Buckingham justly remarks that the task of the government was, from the first, an up-hill one, "which nothing but their devotion to their master's service made them continue; but when a thousand unmistakable signs foretold a rebellion if they persevered, they had no alternative but to put an end to the thing with all convenient dispatch."‡ The truth is, in this case, victory would have been ruin to the victors. By beating a timely retreat, they saved the monarchy. The tory chiefs, however, consoled themselves that they had so damaged the queen's character that even the heads of the great whig families would not wish to have her at the head of the female aristocracy, or to have their wives and daughters at her court. They said: "The stout lady in the magnificent hat and feathers was very well as a source of ministerial embarrassment; but, much as some of them pretended to decry the evidence against her that was elicited during her trial, they took especial care not to allow her anything resembling an intimacy with their wives or daughters." She was, however, visited after the trial by her son-in-law, prince Leopold, and by the duke of Sussex; and for some time the carriages of the highest ladies in the land were at her door. Grateful to Providence for the deliverance she had experienced from the hands of her persecutors, she went in state to St. Paul's to return public thanks to God. But even in this she was subjected to humiliation. An application had been made

* "Memoirs of the Court of George IV.," by the duke of Buckingham, vol. I., p. 73.

† Buckingham's "Memoirs," vol. I., p. 76.

* Eldon's Life, by Twiss, vol. II., p. 395.

† "Life of Eldon," vol. II., p. 104.

‡ Buckingham's "Memoirs," vol. I., p. 85.



QUEEN CAROLINE REFUSED FROM THE DOOR OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

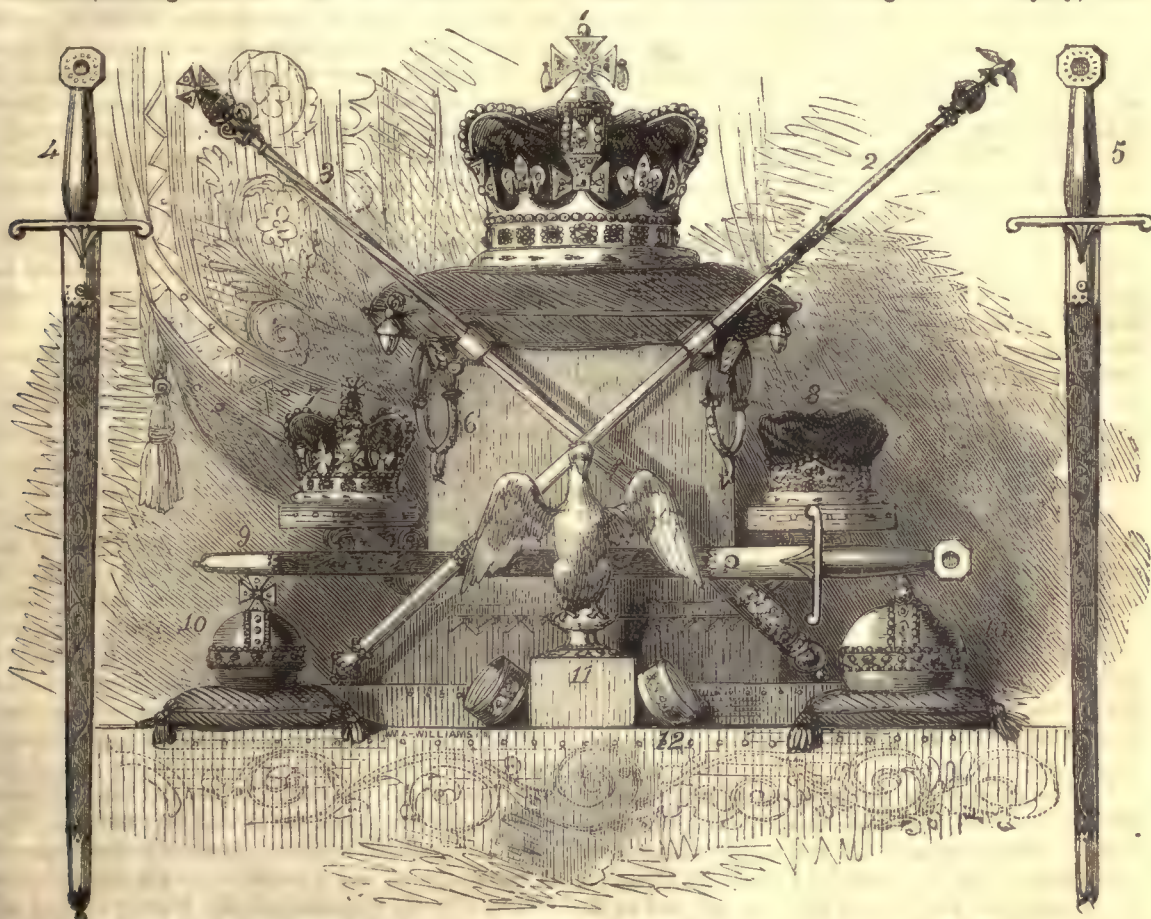
to have a sermon preached on the occasion, and archdeacon Bathurst solicited the honour of delivering an appropriate discourse, but the authorities of the cathedral refused his request, and the ceremony consisted merely of the reading of the morning service. The bishop of Llandaff went so far as to stigmatise the service as "a mockery of a religious solemnity, at which every serious Christian must shudder."*

CHAPTER V.

The Coronation—The Queen's claim to be Crowned with the King rejected
—Coronation of George IV.—The Ceremonial.

THE queen wrote a bold, firm hand, indicating decision of character, forming the letter "R." for "Regina" with a

dangers which menaced the throne, that they did not proceed to extremities against her. She was queen, it is true, but only in name, without the position and consideration which the title should have brought with it. She made an effort, before the parliament was prorogued, to obtain a palace for her residence, and a suitable provision for her support, which had been refused on the part of the king, when an application had been made on her behalf through lord Liverpool. She was informed, however, that the allowance which had been previously made would be continued until parliament should again meet for the dispatch of business. Her solicitor-general, Mr. Denman, went to the house with a message from her majesty, which



THE REGALIA OF ENGLAND.

1. The Crown of the Kings from Charles II. 2. The Sceptre with Dove. 3. The Sceptre with Cross. 4. Sword of State. 5. Sword of Justice. 6. Spurs used by the Kings at Coronation. 7. The Crown of Mary of Medina, used by the Queens from that Period. 8. Crown of Anne Boleyn. 9. Sword of Mercy, with blunt edge. 10. Symbols of Power. 11. Anointing Eagle. 12. Bracelets used by the Queens.

flourish. She never did this so proudly as when she was presented with the copy of the bill of pains and penalties; signing a protest against it, she exclaimed, as she flung down the pen, "Queen, in spite of them!" She remained queen, indeed, at the end of the trial, because the bill had been abandoned; but the carrying of the third reading, by however small a majority, was regarded by the government as tantamount to a condemnation, and it was solely out of respect to the excited feeling of the public, and the

it was pre-determined that he should not deliver. The speaker had obtained his cue, the chancellor was on the alert, and while Mr. Denman stood with the document in his hand, the usher of the black rod appeared, summoning the members to hear the royal speech in the house of lords. By this manoeuvre she was prevented from making her request to the commons. She left nothing undone for the purpose of keeping up her credit with the public, and maintaining her *prestige*. She had loudly protested her innocence of the things laid to her charge, and, as a

* Pelew's "Life of Sidmouth," vol. iii., p. 336.

solemn declaration of this fact, she went to receive the communion at Hammersmith church. In the first lesson for the day, Isaiah lix., there was a verse which many persons thought applicable to her case:—"Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter."

It was arranged that the coronation should take place early in the summer of 1821, and the queen was resolved to claim the right of being crowned with the king. She could hardly have hoped to succeed in this, but her claims were put forth in a memorial complaining that directions had not been given for the coronation of the queen, as had been accustomed on the like occasions, and stating that she claimed, as of right, to celebrate the ceremony of her royal coronation, and to preserve as well her majesty's said right as the lawful right and inheritance of others of his majesty's subjects.

The claims set forth in this petition were enforced by the members of the opposition in the house of commons, taking advantage of the proceedings on the duke of Clarence's annuity bill. Ministers laid down the position that it was only by favour her majesty could be crowned, and that favour they could not advise their royal master to confer. After the presentation of various memorials on the part of the queen, to which no satisfactory answers were given, there was a meeting of the privy council, when, in compliance with the prayer of her majesty's memorial, which was read, it was agreed that she should be heard by counsel. Mr. Brougham then rose, and stated that he had applied to see the "*Liber Regalis*," and that the dean and chapter of Westminster refused access to it, except by order of the highest authority, viz., that of the king, which had not been obtained. The lord chancellor stated that the book might be sent for, and, in the meantime, Mr. Brougham might proceed with his argument, derived from other sources. He then addressed the privy council at great length on her majesty's right, passing in review the history of coronations, from the Saxon times down. The result of his inquiries on the subject is given by lord Eldon in a letter to his daughter, the hon. Mrs. Banks, as follows:—

"I have been at the privy council all the morning, hearing Brougham argue the claim of the queen to be crowned. His argument seemed to most there to prove the very reverse of any such claim, as a right. She claims to be crowned with the king on the same day, and at the same place. William the Conqueror's queen was crowned two years after he was crowned; Henry I.'s queen, ditto; Stephen's queen, ditto; Richard I.'s queen crowned abroad; John's queen not crowned with him, but alone; Henry III.'s queen not with him, but afterwards alone; Edward III.'s queen crowned alone; Henry IV.'s queen not crowned with him, but alone; Henry V.'s ditto; Henry VI.'s queen not crowned with him, but alone; Henry VII.'s queen crowned long after him; Henry VIII.—some of his queens crowned, some not crowned; Charles I.—his queen not crowned at all; Charles II.—his queen not crowned at all; George II.'s queen, or George I.'s, I am not sure which, not crowned at all."

Mr. Denman addressed the council on the same subject.

They were answered by the attorney-general and the solicitor-general at great length. The council, after sitting for three days, adjourned to consider their decision. The greatest interest was excited by this discussion. The records were brought from the Tower: the "*Liber Regalis*" and other ancient volumes. The doors continued closed, and strangers were not allowed to remain in the adjoining rooms and passages. The following official decision was given after some delay:—"The lords of the committee, in obedience to your majesty's said order of reference, have heard her majesty's attorney and solicitor-general in support of her majesty's said claim, and having also heard the observations of your majesty's attorney and solicitor-general thereupon, their lordships do agree humbly to report to your majesty their opinions, that as it appears to them that the queens consort of this realm are not entitled of right to be crowned at any time, her majesty the queen is not entitled as of right to be crowned at the time specified in her majesty's memorials. His majesty, having taken the said report into consideration, has been pleased, by and with the advice of the privy council, to approve thereof."

The date of this document is the 10th of July. On the following day the queen wrote to lord Sidmouth as follows:—"Brandenburgh House, July 11th, 1821.—My lord,—I have received your lordship's letter of yesterday to lord Hood, conveying to me the report of the committee of council, on my memorial to the king in council, claiming my right to be crowned, and as I find the committee positively denies that right which I have claimed, and which all queens consort have enjoyed—without one exception, arising from the will of the sovereign—I consider it necessary to inform your lordship that it is my intention to be present at the ceremony on the 19th, the day fixed for his majesty's coronation, and I therefore demand that a suitable place may be appointed for me. Signed, Caroline R." She received an answer without a signature, beginning "Madam," stating that it was not his majesty's pleasure to comply with the application contained in her letter, and referring her to a previous communication from lord Liverpool, in which he stated that his majesty having determined that the queen should form no part of the ceremonial of his coronation, it was therefore his royal pleasure that she should not attend the ceremony. The letter being without signature, she wrote that she regarded it as anonymous, and of no effect. It was then sent back to her with the signature affixed. She was resolved not to be put off with this rebuff. Lord Hood wrote to the duke of Norfolk, as earl marshal of England, informing him that it was her intention to be at Westminster Abbey at half-past eight o'clock on the morning of the 19th, and requesting him to have persons in attendance to conduct her to her seat. The duke referred her to the acting earl marshal, lord Howard of Effingham, who informed the queen that he could not comply with her commands. She then wrote a letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, expressing her desire to be crowned on some subsequent day before the arrangements were done away with, so that there might be no additional expense. The archbishop replied that he could not stir a step in the matter without orders from his sovereign.

Thus baffled in all her efforts, the courageous woman addressed a letter "to the king's most excellent majesty," commencing "Caroline R.," and headed, "The protest and remonstrance of Caroline, queen of Gt. Britain and Ireland, affirming and maintaining that by the laws, usages, and customs of this realm, from time immemorial, the queens consort ought of right to be crowned at the same time with the king's majesty." This protest is written with great spirit. After some preliminary remarks, she thus alludes to the decision of the privy council:—"But the queen can place no confidence in that judgment, when she recollects that the principal individuals by whom it has been produced were formerly her successful defenders; that their opinions have varied with their interests, and that they have since become the most active and powerful of her persecutors." Still less can she confide in it, when her majesty calls to mind that the leading members of that council, when in the service of your majesty's royal father, reported, in the most solemn form, that documents reflecting upon her majesty were satisfactorily disproved as to the most important parts, and that the remainder was undeserving of credit. Under this declared conviction, they strongly recommended to your royal father to bestow his favour upon the queen, then princess of Wales, though in opposition to your majesty's declared wishes. But when your majesty had assumed the kingly power, these same advisers, in another minute of council, recanted their former judgment, and referred to and adopted these very same documents as a justification of one of your majesty's harshest measures towards the queen—the separation of her majesty from her affectionate and only child! She then proceeds to set forth her claims in the following terms:—"The queen, like your majesty, descended from a long race of kings, was the daughter of a sovereign house, connected by the ties of blood with the most illustrious families in Europe; and her not unequal alliance with your majesty was formed in full confidence that the faith of the king and the people was equally pledged to secure to her all those honours and rights which had been enjoyed by her royal predecessors. In that alliance her majesty believed that she exchanged the protection of her family for that of a royal husband and of a free and noble-minded nation. From your majesty the queen has experienced only the bitterest disappointment of every hope she had indulged. In the attachment of the people she has found that powerful and decided protection which has ever been her steady support and her unfailing consolation. Submission from a subject to injuries of a private nature may be matter of expedience; from a wife it may be matter of necessity; but it never can be the duty of a queen to acquiesce in the infringement of those rights which belong to her constitutional character."

This protest was dated "Queen's house, July 17th." On the 10th of that month, in the commons, Mr. Hume had said, on a motion for adjournment, he thought the house ought not to separate without expressing some opinion upon the manner in which the queen was treated by the ministers. He would ask whether it was their intention to persevere in the course of persecution towards her. If he knew anything of the spirit and character of her majesty,

he believed that she would go to the coronation. If her determination to be present at the ceremony should cause any interruption of the public peace, ministers must impute it to their own conduct. For his own part, he was anxious to take all possible means to prevent so dangerous a consequence, and he therefore now gave notice of an address to the king, that he might be pleased to take measures to provide for the peace and tranquillity of the capital, in consequence of her majesty's resolution to attend the coronation. Mr. Butterworth hoped that she would not be so ill-advised as to interfere with the august ceremonial. Mr. Alderman Wood said that she would act under no suggestions but those of her own dignified mind. Her majesty had the spirit to protect her rights, and to maintain the dignity with which the laws and the constitution had invested her. "Was it decorous or manly," he asked, "or consistent in that honourable member to talk of 'the little credit which her majesty may still have left in the country,' when, if he were to poll his constituents, he would find ninety-nine out of a hundred indignant at the wrongs her majesty had sustained, and firm supporters of her cause?"

On the 11th Mr. Hume brought forward his motion. He differed from the decision of the privy council, and declared his conviction that the queen had just as good a right to be crowned as the king, and that her exclusion would be regarded by the country as most oppressive. He advised the government not to allow her majesty to be further degraded. Mr. Hume had not commenced the reading of his resolution ere the black rod was heard at the door, and before he had concluded he was called to order by the speaker. "The government determined to make the most formidable preparations for the preservation of the peace, and for putting down a riot, should it occur. Troops were seen directing their march from all quarters to the metropolis, and there was not a village in the vicinity which did not display the plumed helmet. George IV., always excessively fond of show and pomp, "regardless of expense," was resolved that the ceremonial of his coronation should outshine anything in history. The nation entered heartily into the spirit of the royal jubilee, and the metropolis was full of excitement. As early as one o'clock on the morning of the 19th, Westminster, the scene of this magnificent pageant, presented a dazzling spectacle. Even at that early hour, those who were fortunate enough to obtain places were proceeding to occupy them. From Charing Cross two streams of carriages extended, one to the abbey and the other to Westminster Hall. The streets were crowded with foot passengers eager to secure seats on the platforms erected along the way, or some standing-place. All distinctions of rank were lost in the throng of eager expectants; judges, bishops, peers, commanders, wealthy citizens, richly-dressed ladies, all mingled in the moving masses that converged towards the great centre of attraction. The king slept during the night in the speaker's apartments, that he might be ready for the ceremony in the morning, the lord great chamberlain standing all night at one side of his chamber, and the usher of the black rod at the other.

The morning of the coronation day was ushered

in by discharges of artillery from the park and the river. The throng of carriages at six o'clock was so great that there was a stoppage for a considerable time. The company, impatient of the delay thus occasioned, got out of their carriages and hurried to their places of destination. The crowd thus advancing shone resplendent with gorgeous costumes, glittering diamonds, and waving plumes, while the figures of some of the nobility walking in their coronation robes and coronets rendered the whole effect of the picture singularly striking and brilliant. The antique and grotesque dresses of some of the performers excited the admiration of the multitude. Nothing could be more impressive than the order and quiet which everywhere prevailed in that assemblage of beauty, of fashion, wealth, and grandeur. No other country in the world could have presented such a spectacle. In Westminster Hall, as early as four o'clock, before the rising sun had lighted the building, the gothic gloom was relieved by the splendour of the dresses of the ladies in the galleries, who "made the temple bright by the display of their beauty and the brilliancy of their decorations."

The first of the official personages who entered in form were the barons of the Cinque Ports, with their canopy borne by eight gentlemen in full dress. It was of straw-coloured silk, richly embroidered with gold, the frame studded with silver ornaments, and the supporting rods of silver, richly embossed. The barons were attired in richly-embroidered dresses. The members of the corporations of London, Oxford, and Dublin, who had mustered at Blackfriars Bridge, came up the river in a state barge, manned by watermen in scarlet liveries, with silver badges and velvet caps. The lord mayor of London was attended by the sword bearer with the city sword, the common crier who bore the city mace, the water bailiff, and his lordship's chaplain, acting as the "common hunt"—an obsolete office, once of great importance in the city. These four officers were attired in new state robes, and attended the lord mayor as his esquires, the two sheriffs following. The aldermen wore full embroidered court dresses, with scarlet robes and gold chains, and black velvet caps surmounted with plumes of three ostrich feathers. The recorder and remembrancer were also present, together with twelve citizens, who attended as masters of the twelve companies of the livery.

The king's heart no doubt swelled with pride as his attendants reported to him the state of things outside, the unparalleled magnificence and grandeur of which he was the centre, representing the majesty of England. Let us leave him admiring his coronation robes, rehearsing his part, and practising his attitudes, and turn to the queen.

At an early hour, a crowd was assembled at her residence in South Audley Street. The wall opposite, in Hill Street, was soon covered with spectators, who announced to the throng below the progress of the preparations:—"The horses are to." "Everything is quite ready." "The queen has entered the coach." Lady Anne Hamilton, "ever faithful found among the faithless," arrived a few minutes before five o'clock, and was most cordially and respectfully greeted. Soon after, the gate was thrown open, and a shout was raised, "The queen! The queen!" She imme-

diately appeared in her state coach, drawn by six bays, attended by lady Hood and lady Anne Hamilton, lord Hood following in his own carriage. The queen looked remarkably well, and acknowledged with composure and dignity the gratulations of the people. The course taken was through Great Stanhope Street, Park Lane, Hyde Park Corner, the Green Park, St. James's Park, Birdcage Walk, and by Storey's Gate along Princes Street to Dean's Yard. The soldiers everywhere presented arms with the utmost promptitude and respect, and the multitude cheered and shouted, "The queen for ever!" Having arrived at Dean's Yard Gate, it was found that the entrance for persons of rank was Poet's Corner; thither the coachman went, but there he found there was no thoroughfare. The coachman next drove to Westminster Hall gate, and there stopped. Lord Hood alighted, and found an open gate leading to the speaker's house, where the king was at the time. The queen alighted from her carriage, a good deal agitated, and proceeded, leaning upon lord Hood's arm. Having reached the door, the royal party discovered that they had gone the wrong way, and returned to the steps by which persons having peers' tickets were permitted to enter. She instantly ascended those steps, but on reaching the platform, they found the passage barred by soldiers, and an officer advanced and asked for their tickets. Lord Hood said he had authority to be there, and on presenting a paper, the party were allowed to pass. When they descended on the other side they found the gate shut. Lord Hood then stated that her majesty did not wish to go into the hall, but into the abbey. She was then conducted back to the Poet's Corner, and arriving at the place where the tickets were received, lord Hood demanded admission for the queen. The doorkeeper said that his instructions were to admit no person without a peer's ticket. Lord Hood asked, "Did you ever hear of a queen being asked for a ticket before? This is your queen. I present to you your queen. Do you refuse her admission?" She also said that she was his queen, and desired permission to pass. The doorkeeper answered that his orders were peremptory. Lord Hood then tendered one ticket which he had, and asked the queen whether she would enter alone. After a short consultation she declined, and it was resolved that, having been refused admission to the cathedral church of Westminster, she should return to her carriage. As she quitted the spot, some persons in the doorway laughed derisively, and were rebuked by lord Hood for their unmannerly and unmanly conduct. She passed out through a group of ladies advancing with their tickets for the abbey, who did not deign to take the slightest notice of her. She was received by the crowd with mingled cheers and hisses, some approving and others disapproving of her conduct. Lady Hamilton and lady Hood seemed to participate in all the feelings of her majesty, as her ears were assailed with the rude cries of "Shame! Shame!" "Off! off!" met by the preponderating cries of "The queen for ever!" kept up with great enthusiasm.

It was a melancholy thing to see the queen of England bandied about from door to door, in the throng of curious and anxious spectators; cheered by some, laughed at by others, and an object of pity to her friends, making vain

efforts to obtain admission to witness the glory of her worthless husband, repulsed at every point by the lowest officials, and compelled to return home discomfited and humiliated. By indiscreet and foolish acts like this she injured her position, and degraded herself to an extent that her husband, powerful and malignant as he was, never could have done. She and her friends counted upon the devotion of the people to her cause, which they hoped would have borne down all impediments and broken through all barriers.

But it was felt that in attempting to intrude herself in that way at the risk of marring a great national festival, and causing tumult and possibly bloodshed, she had forgotten her own dignity; her conduct shocked the public sense of propriety, and went far to forfeit popular sympathy. She became deeply sensible of this fact while waiting for admission, and with all her attempts at hilarity, her laughter and gaiety of manner ill concealed the deep, self-inflicted wounds of her spirit, which were never healed. The internal spring that had sustained her through so many trials was now broken, and her heart sunk within her as she returned home to ruminate on her position. Now completely disenchanted, robbed of the fond illusion which had hitherto affected her perception of things, and viewing her situation in the cold morning light of stern reality, a chill of despondency came over her, and thenceforth settled heavily upon her spirit.

As to the people, their minds were full of the grand spectacle of the coronation. It was to all ranks and classes a novel and interesting exhibition, producing a new and deep sensation, surpassing on the real theatre of life the grandest scenic display they had ever witnessed on any stage. The king had done his utmost as an artist to gratify their taste. His forte lay in matters of costume and decoration, in tailoring and upholstery, and he put forth all his resources in this ceremonial. He had spent many anxious days and nights in company with persons who had most knowledge of such matters, discussing questions of costume, colours, styles, and pictorial effects. The result in this case was what would be pronounced in our day "a great success." The effect of the *tout ensemble* in Westminster Hall was so grand and dazzling, that the king himself seemed disconcerted by it when he entered and saw it for the first time. It was a great treat for those who were in early to watch the progress of the magnificent picture, as one great personage after another entered, and feature after feature, and colour after colour, were added, till all the details were filled up, as if by the magic touches of an unseen artist.

At a quarter past eight o'clock the doors were closed. The canopy bearers were arranged at the foot of the royal platform; and the heralds commenced their arrangements for marshalling the procession in the hall. The king's sergeants entered first in their scarlet robes; the knights and the knight commanders of the Bath followed, in the collars and habits of their order; the judges entered next, and took their places; then privy councillors who were not peers; then the barons; next came the bishops, fifteen in number; after these the viscounts, and then in succession the earls, the marquises, the dukes, the great officers

of state, the archbishops, and the members of the royal family. On the royal platform were the dukes of York, Clarence, Sussex, Cambridge, and Gloucester, and prince Leopold, in their full robes, as knights of the Garter. The duke of Wellington, with his gold staff, as lord high constable, stood near the table in front of the throne, the lord chancellor, the master of the horse, the lord chamberlain, the president of the council, and the lord privy seal being arranged round the same table. The names of the peers assembled in the hall were called over by two heralds, and everything was arranged for the procession.

At ten o'clock precisely the king entered the hall, preceded by the great officers of state, and took his seat at the head of the royal table, robed in a style of surpassing splendour, his hair falling in thick curls over his forehead, and wearing ostrich feathers, surmounted by a black heron's plume. He seemed for a moment nervous, and advanced to his seat with a hurried step, but soon recovered his self-possession, bowing with great affability to the peers around him, and assuming an air of majesty worthy of the great occasion. All the spectators in the gallery rose as he entered, and kept standing while he remained in the hall, the royal band meanwhile playing, "God save the king," and the guns without announcing to the metropolis the commencement of the grand solemnity. The sword of state, the sword of mercy, and the two swords of justice were drawn from their scabbards, and laid upon the table before the king. The gold spurs were also delivered in the same manner. Then entered the dean and chapter of Westminster, in their surplices and rich copes, walking up from the bottom of the hall, preceded by the sergeant of the vestry, in a scarlet mantle; the children of the king's chapel, in scarlet mantles; and the children of the choir, in surplices; the gentlemen of the king's chapel, in scarlet mantles; the choir of Westminster, in surplices, all four abreast. Then came the sub-dean of the chapel royal; two pursuivants of arms; two heralds; the two provincial kings of arms; the dean of Westminster, carrying St. Edward's crown on a cushion of cloth of gold; first prebendary of Westminster, carrying the orb; second prebendary, carrying the sceptre with the dove; third prebendary, carrying the sceptre with the cross; fourth prebendary, carrying St. Edward's staff; fifth prebendary, carrying the chalice and patina; sixth prebendary, carrying the Bible. Having made their reverences repeatedly in different parts of the hall, the dean presented the crown to the lord high constable, who delivered it to the deputy lord great chamberlain, and by him it was placed on the table before the king. The rest of the regalia were severally delivered by each prebendary on his knee to the dean, and by him passed in the same way to the table. The king having commanded the deputy garter to summon the noblemen and bishops who were to bear the regalia, the deputy lord great chamberlain took them up, and placed them in the hands of those by whom they were to be carried. Then the procession commenced with the anthem, "O Lord, grant the king a long life," which was sung in parts, the royal band at the same time playing, the trumpets sounding, and the drums beating till they arrived in the abbey.

The procession was at length formed. It was a curious and instructive exhibition, as bringing out in one view all the costly belongings of royalty which could be grouped together in-doors. The king, who was supported on one side by the bishop of Oxford, on the other by the bishop of Lincoln, wore a cap of state adorned with jewels, under a canopy of cloth of gold, borne by sixteen barons of the Cinque Ports. His train was borne by eight eldest sons of peers, assisted by the master and the groom of the robes, with twenty gentlemen pensioners on each side. The numerous officers of state who took part in the procession were clothed in costumes of endless variety, in every imaginable style of decoration, and the most brilliant and striking colours, the fantastic and grotesque reproduction of the magnificent royalty of olden times, when English kings were men of might, who could wield their heavy broadswords, and lead gallant charges on the battle-field. George IV. had not been distinguished in any such way. He had never been anything higher in the army than a colonel, and had never seen any service; but he was pre-eminently qualified to be the principal figure in a royal pageant, and on this day he did all in his power to prove to the nation that he was the right man in the right place. In contemplating what followed when the heads of the church bestowed their benedictions upon him, and anointed him, we could wish to eliminate his moral character, to forget all about his manner of life, the women he ruined, and the wife he persecuted. A mind that could see through all the imposing pomp and grandeur might have conceived a procession of a different kind—a long train of female victims, abandoned, heart-broken, sunk in poverty and infamy, whom this illustrious prince, with his minions, had made it the chief business of his life to corrupt and ruin. But these were all now forgotten; even the wronged and degraded wife was not allowed a place in the background of the picture.

As the procession moved on to the abbey, the crowd was dazzled with its splendour. Various personages were the objects of cheers or hisses, according as they were acceptable or not to the parties of the king or queen. At length his majesty appeared in the distance. The crowd were then silent, and all eyes were fixed intently on that figure, the most showy and gorgeous impersonation of royalty, perhaps, that ever the people of any European nation had beheld. The following is a lively description of the scene within the abbey, by one who had the privilege of witnessing it:—"The herbwoman with her maids, and the sergeant-porter, remained at the entrance within the west door; the drums and trumpets filed off to the gallery over the entrance door. The abbey at this moment began rapidly to fill. The peeresses—their natural attractions heightened by every aid which art or fancy could supply, their dresses sparkling with jewels, and their white feathers waving in the wind—thronged into the seats appointed for them immediately below the choir, and ranged in rows, to the number of one hundred and fifty-five, without a single creature of the grosser sex to disturb the uniformity or break the delicacy of the scene; with robes of every colour, various as the rainbow, and plumes of hues almost as many, their box showed like a bed of

summer flowers, in which the rose, the tulip and the violet, the snowdrop and the bright blue-bell displayed, contending each in its pride of beauty, and all insisting on pre-eminence. The procession continuing its course—the choirs of the chapel royal and of Westminster, with his majesty's band, to the organ gallery—some little confusion occurred in the filing off of the different bands; but the difficulty was quickly at an end, and upon the entrance of the king into the aisle, a hundred instruments and twice a hundred voices rang out their notes at once, and the loud anthem, attended with the applauding shouts of the spectators, echoed to the very roof of the abbey."

The procession seems to have been too much for the strength of the king. When he arrived at his chair of state opposite the altar, where he first knelt in private devotion, he appeared distressed almost to fainting. It was with uneven steps, and evident difficulty, that he made his way up the aisle. The heat was so great that a lady in one of the galleries swooned, and had to be removed from the building. The king was enormously over-dressed; and we are told that the weight of the state cloak alone, though it had seven supporters, might have overpowered a man in the most vigorous bodily health. The important business of the day was now to be transacted. After the singing of an anthem, and the sounding of trumpets, the ceremony of recognition was proceeded with. The archbishop of Canterbury, the lord chancellor, the lord great chamberlain, the lord high constable, and the earl marshal went each to a different point of the compass, east, south, west, and north, and addressed the people in a loud voice, the king at the same time standing by his chair and showing himself to each side of the theatre, while the archbishop spoke as follows:—"Sirs, I here present unto you king George IV., the undoubted king of this realm: wherefore all you that come this day to do your homage, are ye willing to do the same?" This was answered by loud and repeated acclamations, with cries of "God save king George IV.!"

The trumpets then sounded, another anthem was sung, and the king proceeded to make his first oblation upon the altar, kneeling and uncovered, and being supported in his passage thither by two bishops, the lords carrying the regalia before him. The treasurer of the household then delivered a wedge of gold, a pound weight, to the great chamberlain, which he, kneeling, delivered to the archbishop, and the archbishop to the king, who laid it on the altar. An appropriate prayer was then offered by the archbishop, the communion service was read, with the Nicene creed; then followed a sermon by the archbishop of York, in which, among other good things, he said "that it behoved royalty to be strenuous in giving examples of purity in its own person; that the king should never forget that his virtues form the strongest ties between him and his people. Every page in history proved that people were neither regardless of the character of their sovereign nor blind to his merits." One might suppose from the foregoing remarks that the most reverend preacher meant to be personal, and that he took that solemn occasion to rebuke the king for his vices. But he had no idea of the kind; on the contrary, he poured out the fragrant

oil of flattery very copiously. He said, "Our prudence, our morality, were proverbial amongst other nations, and the virtues of our present king seemed to secure a permanency of that feeling!" After some general reflections on the duties of sovereigns, and praise of the house of Hanover, the archbishop said, "It was a consolation to see the son and worthy successor of George III. treading in the same steps; and, indeed, the past conduct of his majesty had given every reason to hope the best from him for the future!" Then the archbishop administered the

At the sight of this the people, with loud and repeated shouts, cried, "God save the king!" The trumpets sounded, and the great guns from the Tower responded. When the noise ceased, the archbishop addressed to the king a brief exhortation, and an anthem was sung. The archbishop and the other prelates then approached the king, and delivered him the Bible, with the exhortation to do the things contained therein.

And now, the king having been thus anointed and crowned, and having received all the ensigns of royalty,



MARQUIS OF ANGLESSEY

coronation oath, and the ceremony of anointing followed, preceded by the singing of an anthem and prayer.

The investiture now commenced, when his majesty was girt with the sword of state, the armill, or emblem of mercy, and royal robe. The royal or purple robe of state, furred with ermine, was then put on, also the annulum, or ring, the ensign of kingly dignity, and of the defence of the catholic faith. A pair of gloves were next put on his majesty, and the archbishop delivered him the sceptre and the rod of mercy. The crowning here took place. While his majesty sat in king Edward's chair, the dean of Westminster brought the crown from the altar, and the archbishop reverently placed it on the king's head.

the archbishop solemnly blessed him; all the bishops standing about him, with the rest of the peers, adding a loud and hearty "Amen."

The blessing being thus given, the king sat down in his chair, and kissed the archbishop and bishops assisting at his coronation, they kneeling before him one after another. Then the choir began to sing the *Te Deum*, and the king went up to the theatre on which the throne is placed, all the bishops, great officers, and other peers attending him, while he sat down and reposed himself in his chair below the throne. Another anthem having been sung, his majesty was enthronised, holding the sceptre in his right hand, and the orb in his left, all the great officers, those

that bore the swords and the sceptres, standing round, while the archbishop offered up another exhortation and prayer. This being ended, all the peers did homage formally and solemnly. In the meantime the treasurer of the household threw among the people medals of gold and silver, as the king's largess, or donation. The archbishop and bishops first, and then the peers, according to their rank, did homage kneeling, and repeating the oath of allegiance. The communion followed, for which the king offered bread and wine brought to him from king Edward's chapel. He made a second oblation, consisting of a mark weight of gold, which the archbishop received in a basin.

The whole coronation service being concluded, at length the king, attended and accompanied as before, descended from the throne, crowned, carrying the sceptre and rod in his hands, and passed into king Edward's chapel, where he was disrobed and again arrayed with his robe of purple velvet and another crown. During his absence in St. Edward's chapel, which lasted about ten minutes, the abbey became literally deserted. The peeresses rushed out of the church, the box of the foreign ministers was emptied in a moment, the musicians and principal singers abruptly left the choir, and when the king returned, he beheld on the one hand empty benches, covered with litter, and on the other the backs of his courtiers, making their exit with the most undignified haste. His majesty bore this seeming want of respect with great good humour.

During the proceedings in the abbey, Westminster Hall was being prepared for the banquet. There were three tables on each side, each table having covers for fifty-six persons, and each person having before him a silver plate. The other plate was entirely of gold. The dishes served up were all cold, consisting of fowls, tongues, pies, and a profusion of sweetmeats, with conserves and fruit of every kind. At twenty minutes to four o'clock the gates were thrown open to admit the procession on its return. Seen from the opposite end of the hall, the effect was magnificent, as the procession passed under the triumphal arch. On the entrance of the king he was received with loud and continued acclamations. His majesty being seated at the banquet, the first course came with a grand procession, which the king seemed to regard with great satisfaction. The duke of Wellington, as lord high constable, the marquis of Anglesey, as lord high steward, and the deputy earl marshal, lord Howard of Effingham, mounted on horses, and attended by their pages and grooms, advanced to the foot of the platform; the horsemen stopped while the clerks of the kitchen advanced to the royal table, and took the dishes from the gentlemen pensioners. Then the whole procession moved back, the horsemen backing their chargers with the greatest precision, amidst loud applause.

The first course having been removed, a flourish of trumpets was heard at the bottom of the hall, the great gates were instantly thrown wide open, and the champion, Mr. Dymoke, made his appearance under the gothic archway, mounted on his piebald charger, accompanied on the right by the duke of Wellington, and on the left by lord Howard of Effingham, and attended by trumpeters and an esquire. The first challenge was given at the

entrance of the hall, in the following terms:—"If any person, of what degree soever, high or low, shall deny or gainsay our sovereign lord king George IV., of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, defender of the faith, son and next heir to our sovereign lord king George III., the last king deceased, to be right heir to the imperial crown of this United Kingdom, or that he ought not to enjoy the same, here is his champion, who saith that he lieth, and he is a false traitor; being ready in person to combat with him, and in this quarrel will adventure his life against him, on what day soever he shall be appointed." After a pause of a few minutes, the champion flung his gauntlet on the floor. The herald took it up and returned it, as no one appeared to accept the challenge. It was repeated when the cavalcade arrived half way up the hall, and a third time at the top of the first flight of steps, amidst loud applause and shouts of "Long live the king!" His majesty, evidently pleased with his knightly bearing, drank the champion's health in a flowing goblet. The champion, on his part, having received the cup, drank to the king, "Long live his majesty, king George IV.!" He then gave the cup to one of his pages, who bore it away as the perquisite of his master. Immediately after, Garter, attended by the king of arms, proclaimed his majesty's titles in Latin, French, and English, three several times, from the uppermost step of the elevated platform, then in the middle of the hall, and then at the bottom. Some other ceremonies having been gone through, the king's health was proposed by one of the peers, and drank with acclamation. The national anthem was then sung, after which the king rose and said, "The king thanks his peers for drinking his health, and does them the honour of drinking their health and that of his good people." Shortly after, his majesty quitted the hall and returned to his palace in his private carriage, attended by his usual body guard.

From the sublime to the ridiculous is but a step. A scene followed the king's departure which seems almost incredible. After the service of the second course, the numerous attendants, singers, and even ladies and gentlemen began to press round the royal table, as if prepared for a scramble to possess its contents. The crowd of spectators pressed nearer and nearer. For a moment only covetous eyes were cast on the spoils, as if each were afraid to begin the plunder; but, at last, a rude hand having been thrust through the first ranks, and a golden fork having been seized, this operated as a signal to all, and was followed by a "general snatch." In a short time all the small portable articles were transferred to the pockets of the multitude. The lord high chamberlain, hearing of the attack, hastened to the rescue, and with the greatest difficulty saved the more important articles of plate, and had them conveyed to Carlton Garden. Then followed a scene unparalleled in the annals of coronations. The crowds in the galleries had beheld with envy the operations at the banquet. They were very hungry, and very thirsty, and seeing now that Westminster Hall was "liberty hall," they rushed down different stairs and passages, and attacked the viands and the wine. A raging thirst was the first thing to be satisfied, and in a few

minutes every bottle on the table was emptied. A fresh supply was soon obtained from the cellarettes. "From liquids the operators proceeded to solids, and here the work of destruction was equally fierce. Sweetmeats, pastry, and confectionery of all sorts vanished with the rapidity of lightning." When the ravening selfishness of the hungry crowd was satisfied, the gentlemen recovered their politeness, and began to think of the ladies. Groups of beautiful women then found their way to the tables, and every effort was made to afford them the refreshment of which they stood so much in need. In the meantime, the plunderers took advantage of the confusion to enrich themselves with trophies, breaking and destroying the table ornaments to obtain fragments of things too cumbersome to carry away. Thus, baskets, flower-pots, vases, and figures were everywhere disappearing, and these were followed by glasses, knives, forks, salt-spoons, and, finally, the plates and dishes. The last were engraved with the royal arms and the letters "Geo. IV.," and were therefore specially coveted as memorials. The dirty state of the articles, however, was rather out of keeping with the costly dresses; but the ladies and gentlemen got over the difficulty by wrapping up the articles in their pocket-handkerchiefs. Having thus secured all the spoils they could, they made all possible haste to their carriages. At a subsequent period, it was with the greatest difficulty that the royal plate could be kept from being carried away by the multitude outside, when the barriers were removed.

"The excitement occasioned by the gaudy pageant of the coronation," says a contemporary writer, "had no sooner subsided, than the attention of the people was turned to the enormous expenses incurred, and which were to be defrayed from the public purse. The single item of twenty-five thousand pounds for the robes of the king, which were only worn for a few hours, and then to be deposited as useless lumber on the shelves of the royal wardrobe, naturally met with the indignant reprobation of the people. They beheld their interests sacrificed, their distresses aggravated, their feelings trifled with, for the mere purpose of gratifying an inordinate love of pomp and pageantry. With the last light that was extinguished at the banquet scene at which an hour before shone the pride of English beauty and of English chivalry—with the last retiring step from the deserted hall—gradually subsided the public interest in the pageant; and it was then discovered that, with the exception of the aristocracy and the immediate dependents of the court, its retainers and its minions, the public voice deprecated the ceremony; and that so far from adding to the popularity of the monarch, it abrogated from him all claim and title to the character of a patriotic king. The venal crew hired for the purpose to exclaim 'God save the king!' and to hiss the queen, were people of a different stamp and character from those who but a few days before had led the ranks and filled up the van of public opinion. They were the vain, the aristocratic, and the wealthy, who could pay for such exhibitions; while the spacious area in view was filled by the king's partisans, selected from subordinate stations in society. Many even of these hung their heads with shame, as if conscious to themselves of the mean and dastardly part they were

acting, in direct opposition to the general voice of their countrymen. This, indeed, was not a time that the king could stoop to feel; it was the general holiday of hypocrisy and dissimulation. After the day of the coronation, the mask dropped from the royal face. The carnival was over, and the royal actor approached the crisis of his policy. The blow had taken effect; it had struck on the heart of the unhappy queen. Private insult and secret persecution she could endure; but open insult, in the presence of the people, who but a few days before had attended her in triumph, accomplished her destruction. Her former invincible resolution failed to support her. She saw what the innocent look to, after trial and acquittal, to be of no use to her. She was still persecuted, still overlooked, and even her judges shunned her. "Their triumph," she said, "only precedes mine by a few hours. It is their turn next, and may God forgive them!"*

After the coronation, the queen resided at Brandenburgh House, determined to lead a life of dignified retirement. But the violent agitation and excitement, and the terribly painful mortification to which she was subjected in her ill-advised attempt to form part of the coronation pageant, were too much for her constitution. The functions of the body were therefore wholly deranged. An obstruction of the bowels took place, which terminated in inflammation and mortification. As soon as it was evident that her end was approaching, much public sympathy was excited, and the vicinity of her residence was incessantly thronged with persons of all classes making anxious inquiries about her health, and solicitous for her restoration. On the 4th of August, when her professional advisers were receiving instructions about the disposition of her property, one of them suggested the propriety of sending a messenger to Italy to seal up her papers, in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of her enemies. "And what if they do?" she exclaimed; "I have no papers that they may not see. They can find nothing, because there is nothing, nor ever has been, to impeach my character." One of them said that he was aware of that, but her enemies might put there what they did not find. She replied, "I have always defied their malice, and I defy it still." Nevertheless, it was her conscious failure in her efforts to make the public believe this, coupled with the public humiliation to which she had been subjected, that bowed down her spirit at last, and gave the victory to her enemies. She had painted their characters in vivid colours in her private diary, and might have transmitted their punishment to posterity, had she ordered it to be preserved and published; but she gave directions to have it destroyed, and it was burnt in her presence, by one of her foreign maids. After suffering intensely for four or five days, she sank into a stupor, from which she never woke, and on the 7th of August, after an entire absence of sense and faculty for more than two hours, expired Caroline of Brunswick, queen consort of George IV., in the fifty-fourth year of her age. She had by her bedside in her last hours her faithful friends and constant attendants, lord and lady Hood, and lady Anne Hamilton; alderman Wood, who had been devoted to

* *Memoirs of George IV.* by Robert Huish, vol. ii., p. 218.

her interests from the first, was also present, as well as her legal and medical advisers. Lord Holland, who had been one of her defenders, gives the following estimate of her character in his diary :—

"She was at best a strange woman, and a very sorry and uninteresting heroine. She had, they say, some talent, some pleasantry, some good humour, and great spirit and courage. But she was utterly destitute of all female delicacy, and exhibited in the whole course of the transaction relating to herself very little feeling for anybody, and very little regard for honour and truth, or even for the interests of those who were devoted to her, whether the people in the aggregate, or the individuals who enthusiastically espoused her cause. She avowed her dislike for many, *scarcely concealed her contempt for all*: in short, to speak plainly, if not mad, she was a very worthless woman." Nearly to the same effect is the sketch of her character given by one who knew her much better than lord Holland :—"I have never known a more extraordinary person than the princess," says lady Charlotte Bury. "She writes occasionally with much spirit, and many of the copies of her letters to the prince are both clever and touching. Sometimes there is a series of exalted sentiment in what she says and does that quite astonishes me, and makes me rub my eyes and open my ears to know if it is the same person who condescends to talk low nonsense, and sometimes even gross ribaldry. One day I think her all perfection, another I know not what to think. The tissues of her character are certainly more uneven than of any other person I was ever acquainted with. One day there is tinsel and tawdry; another worsted; another silk and satin; another gold and jewels; another *de la boue, de la crasse—que dirais je? et peut-être j'ai trop dit.*"

On another occasion lady Charlotte returns to the same subject. "The tissues of all human character are more or less uneven; but I never knew greater inequality than that of this very extraordinary woman; posterity will never do justice to her memory, for as, in most cases, the bad and inferior parts of her character were tangible and prominent to the observation, while those alone who lived in her intimate society knew of the many good and great ingredients which formed part of the heterogeneous mixture, it ought to be recorded to the honour of the princess that until she was goaded to madness she never felt any hatred against the prince's friends as such; only against persons who had been her adherents, and turned from her to bow the knee to Baal, did she show any resentment."*

It was a great aggravation of the difficulties and wrongs of the queen, that she was made alternately the instrument by which whigs and tories advanced their own party interests. When the former made capital of her grievances as princess of Wales, the latter put forth all their energies to blunt or break the instrument in the hands of their opponents. Again, when the tories stood upon her shoulders to climb into power, she was thrown into the hands of the whigs. In proportion to the earnestness with which the opposition bewailed her grievances and

urged her claims, was the vehemence of the ministers in hurling against her the bolts with which they were supplied by their royal master. She seems to have had a presentiment that she must succumb at last to the storm of persecution that never ceased to beat upon her. A touching incident illustrating this fact is recorded by lady Charlotte Bury :—"There was a small and very agreeable party at supper with the princess at Kensington; they sat at table till a late hour, when some one ventured to hint that morning was at hand. 'Ah,' said the princess, 'God, he knows when we may all meet again. To tell you God's truth, when I am happy and comfortable I could sit on for ever.' There was heaviness in her mirth, and every one seemed to feel it as they sat on. At last they rose, and most of the guests went away. Scarcely had Sir H. Englefield, Sir William Gell, and Mr. Craven reached the ante-room, when a long and protracted roll of thunder shook the palace to its very foundations, a light brighter than the sun flashed into the drawing-room, a violent hissing noise followed, and a ball of electric fluid, very like what is represented on the stage, seemed to fall close to the window where the princess and lady Bury were standing. Scarcely had they recovered the shock when all the gentlemen returned, stating that the sentinel at the door was knocked down, and a great portion of the gravel walk torn up. 'Ah,' said the princess, undismayed, but solemnly, shaking her head, 'this forebodes my downfall.'"

The king, who had set out on his long-premeditated visit to Ireland, leaving his wife on her death-bed, was already at Holyhead when he received the tidings of her decease. From that port lord Londonderry wrote a note to the lord chancellor, in which he said, "I add this private note to the letter which the king has directed me to write, to say that his majesty is quite well, and has evinced, since the intelligence of the queen's death was received, every disposition to conform to such arrangements and observances as might be deemed most becoming upon an occasion which cannot be regarded in any other light than as the *greatest of all possible deliverances*, both to his majesty and to the country. The king feels assured that the events to which my letters refer, once in your hands, will be sifted to the bottom and wisely decided; and to the advice he may receive there will be every disposition on his majesty's part to conform; but where papers connected with his daughter, as well as other branches of his family, are in question, your lordship will estimate the deep interest the king takes in your giving the whole your best consideration.

"The king proposes to pass over to Dublin to-day. The wind is so unfair that his majesty intends to avail himself of the conveyance of a steam-packet, by which, the sea being very tranquil, he hopes to reach Howth in seven or eight hours, and to pass quietly to the Phoenix Park, where his majesty will remain in privacy till the queen's remains have been embarked for the continent."

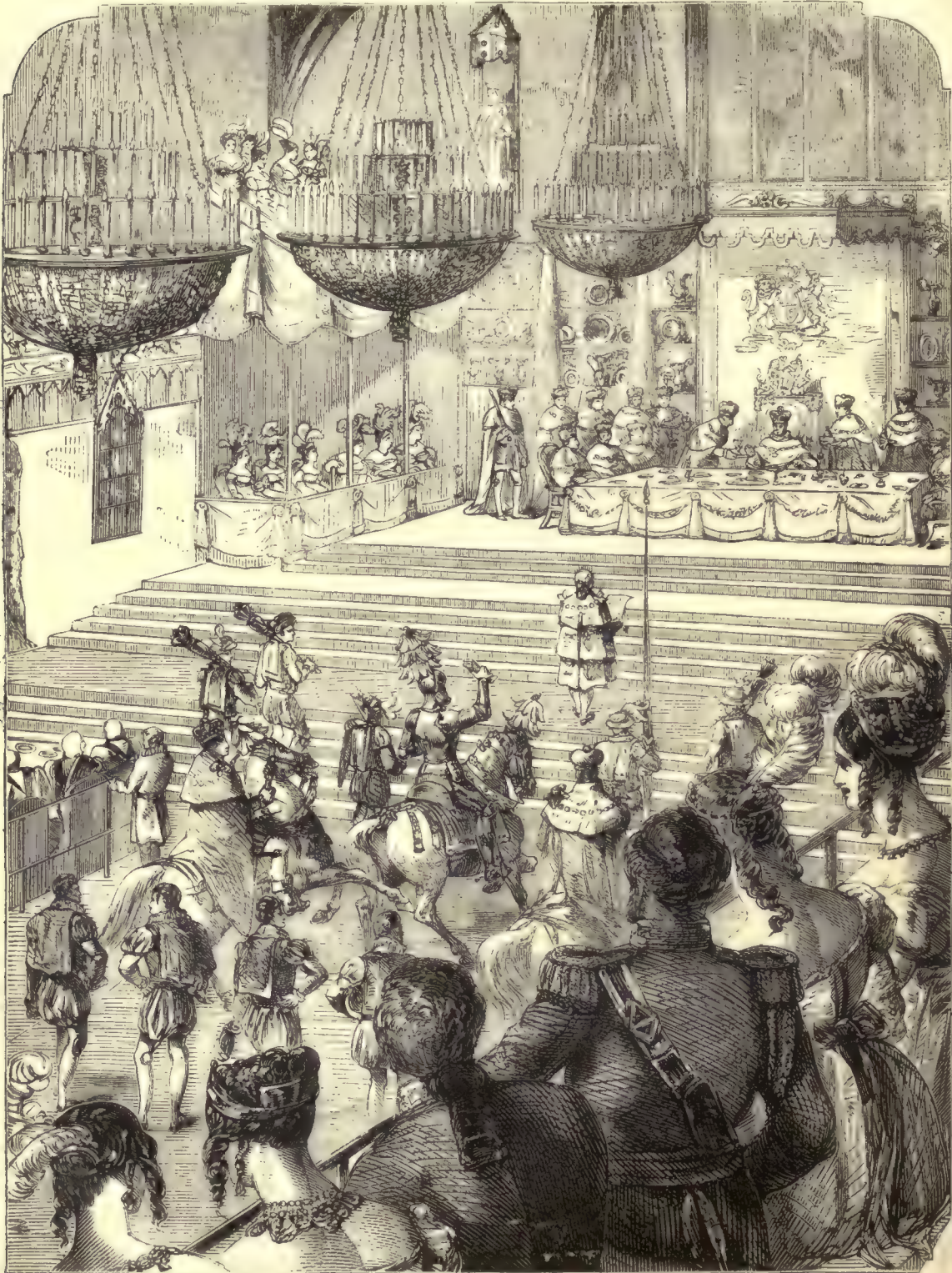
The king rejoiced too soon. The announcement to the public of the queen's death was the knell of the popularity

* "Diary of the Times of George IV.," vol. I., pp. 95—127.

* "Diary," vol. I., p. 123.

which he had recently acquired. It was natural enough, from his past relations with her, that he should feel her death to be what he so candidly avowed, "the greatest of all possible deliverances"—the happy conclusion of a long-protracted and disgraceful war, which had divided the nation into two parties. The woman fell in the struggle which she had so courageously maintained; for on the side of the oppressor there was power. But his triumph was disastrous. Death seemed to atone for all the errors of his victim, and no one now seemed inclined to draw "her frailties from their dread abode." There was an immediate and powerful reaction in the public mind against the king, which was strengthened by the ungracious measures adopted in connection with her funeral. There was a clause in her will to this effect:—"I desire and direct that my body be not opened, and that three days after my death it be carried to Brunswick for interment; and that the inscription on my coffin be, 'Here lies Caroline of Brunswick, the injured queen of England.'" The government were very anxious to have the corpse sent out of the kingdom immediately, in order that its presence might not interfere with the festivities in Ireland; they therefore wished to have the remains dispatched at once to Harwich for embarkation. Lady Hood appealed in vain to lord Liverpool for some delay, on the ground that the queen's ladies were not prepared to depart so soon, at the same time protesting against the proposed military escort. She received a discourteous answer, that the arrangements were made and could not be altered. They, whose great object was to thwart the queen's wishes in life, were now most scrupulous in attending to her wishes after death, laying hold upon the clause of the will about the removal of her body, because it served their own purpose, and hypocritically pretending to comply with it most religiously. The military guard was an ostensible honour; but its real object was to prevent popular manifestations detrimental to the government in connection with the funeral. The friends of the queen could not even learn by what route the body would be conveyed. It should have gone through the city, where the mayor and corporation announced their intention of following the hearse; but to prevent that honour, it was ordered that the corpse should be sent round by the new road to Romford. When the undertaker appeared to carry out the arrangements of the government, the queen's executors, Dr. Lushington and Mr. Wilde, entered the room and protested, in right of the legal power invested in them, against the removal of the body till arrangements suitable to the rank and dignity of the deceased should be made. But the government officers insisted on obeying their orders. The procession set out on the line which had been prescribed; but the indecent proceeding was an outrage on public feeling to which the people were determined not to submit. The funeral passed from Hammer-smith to Kensington Church without obstruction; there the conductors were turning off from the way to the city, in order to get into the Bayswater Road, when they were met by a loud cry of wrath and execration from the multitude. In a few minutes the road was dug up, barricaded, and rendered impassable. The life guards and the chief

magistrate of Bow Street appeared, and seeing the impossibility of forcing a passage, they ordered the *cortège* to proceed on the direct route through the city, amidst thundering shouts of victory that might have appalled the king, had he heard them. In the meantime the multitude had been rushing through the parks in mighty surging masses, now in one direction and now in another, according to the varying reports as to the course the procession was to take. Orders had been issued from the government that it should go through the Kensington gate of Hyde Park, but the people closed the gates, and assumed such a fierce and determined attitude of resistance, that the authorities were again compelled to give way, and again the popular shouts of victory sounded far and wide. Peremptory orders were given by the government to pass up the park into the Edgware Road, either by the east side or through Park Lane. In the effort to do this the line of procession was broken, the hearse was got into the park, and hurried onwards to Cumberland Gate; but the people had outrun the military, and again blocked up the way in a dense mass. Here a collision ensued: the populace had used missiles; the military were irritated, and having had peremptory orders, they fired on the people, wounding many and killing two. The people at length gave way, and the hearse of England's queen passed over the blood of her friends. But the people, baffled for the moment, made another attempt. At Tottenham Court Road the guards found every way closely blocked up, except the way to the city. In this way, therefore, they were compelled to move, amidst the exulting shouts of the multitude. Seeking an outlet to the suburbs at every turn in vain, the procession was forced down Drury Lane into the Strand. The passage under Temple Bar was accompanied by the wildest possible excitement and shouts of exultation. The battle between the people and the sovereign, contending for the dead body of the queen, had been waged with varying fortunes for seven hours. The depth and intensity of the popular excitement may be inferred from the fact that, though the day was stormy and cold, and it rained heavily and the streets were covered with mud, they assembled in such vast multitudes, and remained so long exposed to the inclemency of the weather. The corporate functionaries assembled in haste and accompanied the funeral to Whitechapel. On the whole way to Romford, we read, that not only the direct, but the cross roads, were lined with anxious spectators. The shops were closed, the bells were tolling, mourning dresses were generally worn, and in every direction symptoms abounded of the deep feeling excited by the death of the queen. The funeral *cortège* rested for the night at Colchester, the remains being placed in St. Peter's Church. There the plate with the inscription "injured queen" was taken off, and another substituted. At Harwich the coffin was unceremoniously conveyed to the Glasgow frigate, attended by lord and lady Hood, lady Anne Hamilton, Mr. Austin, Dr. and Mrs. Lushington, and Count Vasally, the body being now under the charge of Captain Doyle, who, a quarter of a century before, had helped the royal bride on board the Jupiter. At length the remains arrived at their last resting-place, in a vault beneath the cathedral of St.



BANQUET IN WESTMINSTER HALL AT THE CORONATION OF GEORGE IV. THE CHAMPION'S CHALLENGE.

Baige, at Brunswick, surrounded by the monuments of her illustrious ancestors.

CHAPTER VI.

Visit of George IV. to Ireland—The King's Arrival and Reception at Howth—Public Entry into Dublin—Review in the Phoenix Park—Christ's Church Cathedral—Levéé at the Castle—The Drawing-room—The Theatre Royal—The Linen Hall—The Bank of Ireland—The Corporation Banquet—The Royal Dublin Society—Visit to Slane Castle—Chief Justice Bushe—The Dublin University—Installation of the Knights of St. Patrick—Ball at the Rotunda—The Curragh of Kildare—The Castle Chapel—Visit to Powerscourt—The King's Departure—The King's Message of Conciliation to his Irish Subjects—The Effect of the Royal Visit on the Country.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT once wrote a letter of a single sentence to his friend lord Cloncurry, as follows:—"Dear

after the coronation, and arrived at Plymouth on the 1st of August, amidst the huzzas of an immense concourse of people. On the following day the royal squadron departed for Ireland, and anchored in the bay at Holyhead on the 7th.

The news of his approach threw the people of Dublin into a paroxysm of joy, to which the newspapers of the day gave expression in the most extravagant terms. The blessing that awaited them seemed too great to be realised. Never had they comforted their hours of despondency or flattered themselves in seasons of imagined felicity, with anything approaching to the reality which fortune was about to shower upon them. The king's name, they declared, was more to them than a tower of strength; it



CARLISLE BRIDGE AND SACKVILLE STREET, DUBLIN.
(From a Print published by Messrs. Stark Brothers)

lord Cloncurry, I should like to know what you think would allay Irish agitation? Yours truly, F. B."* It would have taken a volume to answer this question, and perhaps, after all, Sir Francis, Burdett would not have been satisfied. George IV. thought that his visit would have had that effect, and appearances for a time seemed to justify his sanguine anticipations. The visit had been long meditated. He set out on a yachting excursion soon

had effected what neither patriots, philosophers, nor moralists could ever accomplish. "It had hushed the billows of discord at once. It had sent out the refreshing breath of peace to soothe the public heart. It had taught discontent composure, and driven from the land the troubled demons of division, disquiet, and national anarchy.

The wandering shadows, ghastly pale,
All trooped to their infernal jail;

and loyalty, unanimity, and hope have proclaimed their jubilee." They confessed that they had never dared to

* "Personal Recollections of Lord Cloncurry," p. 235.

hope for the blessed realities they were about to witness, and that such a moral revolution in the public mind must be regarded even by the most sanguine as something miraculous. There was not a meeting, or a club, or a coterie in the city that was not pervaded by the same spirit of union.

There was intense anxiety and most painful suspense while the queen was on her death-bed, lest her demise should prevent the royal visit. The king, also, was evidently troubled in mind for the same reason, as appears from the following extracts from a letter written by himself:—"On Tuesday, at noon, as I had heard nothing from my friend, lord Sidmouth, who had passed over to the other coast some hours before, we took up our anchorage here. We had reason to know he had heard the report before he left Holyhead, and it was determined, as the best medium line that could be adopted until I could hear from him, that I should proceed for twelve hours to lord Anglesey's. Accordingly, I wrote to lords Sidmouth and Bloomfield, to acquaint them with the communication I had received respecting the queen, to account for delay in my not proceeding to Ireland, and desiring lord Sidmouth's advice as to what I had best do, and that we would make all the arrangements which might be necessary under existing circumstances. I returned from Plas Newydd to my yacht here about four o'clock on the next day (Wednesday), and found lord Sidmouth just disembarked, and ready to receive me. He stayed about two hours with me on board, and then again took his passage in the steamboat, having arranged with me that if the accounts from London of the queen the next day should represent her to be in an improved state, then we should set sail as quickly as possible, and land at Dunleary, and make my public *entrée* at Dublin on that day (Friday), although he had already taken measures for a private entry, if matters should be worse, as it was utterly impossible for me, under any circumstances, not to proceed now to Ireland, where public notice would be given that I should observe the strictest privacy for some days until we were acquainted either with the queen's recovery or demise, and till after the body should be interred.

"Lord Londonderry fortunately arrived the next morning, after lord Sidmouth left me—that is to say, yesterday (Thursday), before seven o'clock in the morning—and has remained with me, and will continue to do so till I have set my foot on the Irish shore. He approved of all the arrangements I had made with lord Sidmouth as the best possible, and with every view I had taken of the whole circumstance; and it is now determined that, either in the course of the day, or as soon as possible as the wind and weather will permit (but which at present does not seem encouraging), we are to set sail, either in the yacht alone, or by steam, to Ireland; to make Howth (about five miles from Dublin), and to proceed, without any sort of show or display, to the Phoenix Park, without entering or passing through Dublin at all. My arrival there will then be publicly announced, and the strictest privacy for a few days will be observed, as far as proper decency and decorum may require; and after that the day will be announced when I shall make my public *entrée*,

and when all public ceremonies and rejoicings will commence."*

The old exclusive corporation of Dublin, the very stronghold of protestant ascendancy, was all conciliation and liberality upon this occasion. This was due in a great measure to the lord mayor, Mr. Bradley King. On the 10th of July a meeting of Roman catholics had been held, to arrange matters for an aggregate meeting, for the purpose of addressing the king on his arrival. To this meeting a message came from the lord mayor, intimating that he would use his authority to prevent the dressing of the statue of king William on the 12th. This statue, which stands on College Green, being the idol of the Orangemen, was always re-painted and decorated in the brightest orange tints for the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne. Another communication came from the committee of the corporation, inviting lord Fingal and the catholics to co-operate with them in honouring the king. Being assured that this proposal was "for the purpose of lasting concord and harmony," the catholics welcomed the offer as "an auspicious omen of the future happiness of Ireland." Notwithstanding these laudable endeavours on both sides to put an end to the reign of discord, the cup of harmony was near being dashed from their lips by the indiscreet zeal of some of the Orangemen, who dressed the statue surreptitiously. An explanation, however, was offered, and the catholics were assured that this unauthorised act implied no breach of faith. As the lord mayor was most active on the protestant side, so, on the Roman catholic side, Mr. Daniel O'Connell, whose character and eloquence had now raised him to a position of great influence, took a leading and most effective part. Owing to the exertions of these two leaders of extreme parties, whose personal friendship lasted through life, a memorable public dinner, to commemorate the coronation, had taken place at Morrison's Hotel, when four hundred of the most distinguished protestants and catholics sat down at the same table, the tickets being two guineas each. The lord mayor presided, and the vice-chair was occupied by the earl of Fingal. Fifteen hogsheads of porter were given to the people to drink the king's health. All the speeches breathed conciliation. Mr. O'Connell, in responding for the health of "the stewards," said, "In sorrow and in bitterness, but with the best intention, he had for the last fifteen years ineffectually laboured for his unhappy country. One bright day had now realised all his fond expectations. Next to the gratification of the present scene was the expected arrival of his majesty, who came of his own free will, the sound of his footsteps proclaiming unanimity and peace. On this occasion the protestant was ready to meet the catholic, and the catholic the protestant; and surely, from a prince who declared that the crown was only kept for the benefit of the people, everything was to be expected." This unprecedented meeting was the prelude to the universal harmony that accompanied the royal visit.

As the king was to land privately and to proceed to the viceregal lodge in Phoenix Park without entering the city,

* Knighton's "Memoirs," p. 91.

it was uncertain whether he would come by Dunleary or Howth. There was an idea that he would land at the former place on Sunday, the 12th of August, and immense crowds lined the coast during the day, watching for the approach of the steamer. They were disappointed, for his majesty arrived at Howth about five o'clock. The congregations from the different churches were waiting on the pier, to which the royal carriage had driven rapidly down, when all eyes were strained to get a glimpse of the sovereign—the first king of England that had ever come to Ireland on a mission of peace. At length the Lightning steam-packet, captain Skinner, came near the pier-head. For a few minutes there was breathless suspense, the anxious hearts of the spectators beating high, till some person, recognising his majesty on board, cried out, "The king!" when the multitude enthusiastically exclaimed, "The king, the king, God bless him!" This was followed by immense cheering, repeated again and again, when the king stood forward, and, taking off his cap, flourished it over his head several times. He was dressed in a blue frock, blue pantaloons, Hessian boots, with a black cravat, white silk gloves, and a foraging cap with gold lace. He was accompanied by the marquis of Londonderry, the marquis of Thomond, lord Mount Charles, lord Francis Conyngham, and Mr. Freeling, secretary to the post office, England. A small ship-ladder, covered with carpeting, was fixed, to facilitate his landing. This he ascended without assistance, and with great agility. As the narrow pier was crowded to excess, he found himself jammed in by a mass of people, who could not be displaced without throwing numbers of them into the water. Though he had reason to be displeased with the want of proper arrangements, he bore the inconvenience with good humour; indeed, his majesty was very jolly, owing it is said, to copious drafts of Irish whisky punch with which he had drowned sorrow during the voyage, for the loss of the queen. On seeing lord Kingston in the crowd, he exclaimed, "Kingston, Kingston, you black-whiskered, good-natured fellow, I am happy to see you in this friendly country." Having recognised Mr. Dennis Bowles Daly, he cordially shook hands with that gentleman, who at the moment was deprived of a gold watch, worth sixty guineas, and a pocket-book, by one of the light-fingered gentry. The king also shook hands with numbers of the persons present who were wholly strangers to him. At length his majesty managed to get into his carriage, and as he did so, the cheers of the multitude rent the air. He turned to the people, and, extending both his hands, said, with great emotion, "God bless you all. I thank you from my heart." Seemingly exhausted, he threw himself back in the carriage; but on the cheering being renewed, he bent forward again, and, taking off his cap, bowed most graciously to the ladies and those around him. One of the horses became restive on the pier, but a gentleman, regardless of personal danger, led him till he became manageable. The cavalcade drove rapidly to town, and proceeded by the circular road to the park. On the way there was a constant accession of horsemen, who all rode uncovered. When they came to the entrance of the demesne, the gentlemen halted outside the gate, not wishing to intrude, when the king put out his head and said,

"Come on, my friends." On alighting from his carriage he turned round at the door, and addressed those present in nearly the following words:—"My lords and gentlemen, and my good yeomanry,—I cannot express to you the gratification I feel at the warm and kind reception I have met with on this day of my landing among my Irish subjects. I am obliged to you all. I am particularly obliged by your escorting me to my very door. I may not be able to express my feelings as I wish. I have travelled far, I have made a long sea voyage; besides which, particular circumstances have occurred, known to you all, of which it is better at present not to speak; upon those subjects I leave it to delicate and generous hearts to appreciate my feelings. This is one of the happiest days of my life. I have long wished to visit you; my heart has been always with the Irish; from the day it first beat I have loved Ireland. This day has shown me that I am beloved by my Irish subjects. Rank, station, honours, are nothing; but to feel that I live in the hearts of my Irish subjects is to me exalted happiness. I must now once more thank you for your kindness, and bid you farewell. Go and do by me as I shall do by you—drink my health in a bumper; I shall drink all yours in a bumper of good Irish whisky."

The last words of this speech were addressed jocosely to some of the lower class who thronged round, their faces beaming with admiring loyalty. His majesty shook hands most cordially and indiscriminately with the persons near him. It is a singular fact that there was not a soldier or policeman visible in the whole line from Howth to the park. There were no guards, no pomp, no ceremony. The king appeared in "fatigue dress," and found himself all at once in the midst of an eager crowd of his Irish subjects on the first moment of his landing, and this in a country the disaffection and turbulence of whose people had been a constant trouble to his government.

The royal visit to Ireland, like all the public displays of George IV., had its secret history, which did not exhibit him in the most favourable light. The "Memoirs of the Court of George IV." contain private letters, now published for the first time, which throw fresh light upon those transactions, and give some of them a rather ludicrous aspect. Mr. W. H. Freemantle, writing to the marquis of Buckingham, says, "I don't know whether you have heard any of the details from Ireland, but the conduct of the Irish is beyond all conception of loyalty and adulation, and I fear will serve to strengthen those feelings of self-will and personal authority which are at all times uppermost in *'the mind.'*" The passage to Dublin was occupied in eating goose-pie and drinking whisky, of which his majesty partook most abundantly, singing many joyous songs, and being in a state on his arrival to double in sight even the number of his gracious subjects assembled on the pier to receive him. The fact was that he was in the last stage of intoxication: however, they got him to the park."*

But whatever happened on board ship, and whether or not the king was "half-seas over," he acquitted himself so as to excite the boundless admiration of his Irish subjects.

* Buckingham's "Memoirs," vol. i. p. 194.

On Monday the lawn before the viceregal lodge was covered with carriages and vehicles of every description, filled with ladies anxious to get even a distant view of the king. Among these, equestrians and pedestrians were crowding; and, from the number of standings, and basket-women moving about, the place had the appearance of Donnybrook fair. But his majesty, wishing to remain as private as possible until his public entry, did not appear. On Wednesday he held a private levée to receive the state functionaries, who were ordered to appear in mourning.

On Friday, the 17th, his majesty made his public entry into Dublin. As early as six o'clock in the morning the streets exhibited great bustle, with the rapid movement of carriages, horsemen, and pedestrians to the places allotted for them; at eight o'clock a number of the representative bodies had assembled; at nine the carriages of the nobility, the officers of state, and the gentry who were to take part in the procession, were seen driving to their respective stations, filled with the high personages of the realm in full dress, the servants in new and splendid liveries, and the horses decked out in gay and gaudy trappings, intermixed with a profusion of blue ribbons: blue being the "welcome colour" agreed to be worn in honour of his majesty. Platforms had been erected in various places along the line of procession, where seats were procured with difficulty at high rates. These were early occupied by elegantly dressed ladies. About nine o'clock a procession passed through Dame Street towards Mountjoy Square which excited universal admiration. It was composed of the silk ribbon, stuff, and tabinet weavers, each man dressed or ornamented with the fabric of his trade, and carrying a small flag. No such procession could be mustered now, as the silk weavers are extinct, and the liberty where they flourished is a decayed and ruinous district. At half-past eleven the lord mayor, aldermen, sheriffs, and common council, preceded by a band of music, mounted and took their places at the top of Sackville Street, within a barrier which had been erected to represent the city gates—a sort of Temple Bar which had been extemporised for the occasion. The city marshal appeared on horseback in full uniform, having before him the keys of the city on a salver. The old city state coach was furnished up for the occasion, and looked quite grand drawn by six beautiful bays. Altogether, the corporation made a very respectable appearance on this the greatest day of its history. The aspect of the streets along the line of the procession was gay and brilliant in the extreme: flags, tastefully ornamented, floated from the windows; balconies, festooned and adorned with laurel, were erected wherever an opportunity offered; banners and streamers fluttered in the breeze over public buildings and private houses. In front of the General Post Office a gallery was erected, covered with crimson cloth and hung with laurel wreaths; from the lofty summit of Nelson's pillar the royal standard was displayed, and on the balcony beneath its waving folds a number of people had stationed themselves to view the procession. The ships in the river were all adorned with flags and streamers. Beautiful triumphal arches were thrown across several of the leading streets. A little before twelve o'clock all things had been arranged, and the

king entered an open carriage, drawn by eight horses led by grooms, and attended by a numerous train of footmen in the most showy liveries. His majesty was dressed in a full military uniform, decorated with the order and ribbon of St. Patrick; his hat was ornamented with a rosette composed of shamrocks, of more than twice the size of a military cockade. He was accompanied in his carriage by the marquises of Headfort and Winchester. A signal rocket having been sent up, the artillery at the Wellington monument announced the starting of the procession, which passed out through the northern gate and moved along the route prescribed. It was joined on the Circular Road by the gentlemen of the Dublin corporation, and a deputation from the inhabitants of the city, all on horseback; the former wearing pink silk scarfs with white fringes, and bearing wands and favours. The citizens went by parishes, ranged in alphabetical order, with their distinctive banners and inscriptions. After these came the woollen weavers; next the cotton weavers, walking six abreast; then the stuff, silk, and ribbon weavers, all richly dressed, and with various fanciful decorations. A long line of private carriages closed the procession, which passed from the Circular Road down Eccles Street, Temple Street, and Gardner's Row, to the bottom of Cavendish Row, where the city gates had been erected. At the barrier there was a long pause, when an aide-de-camp, galloping down Cavendish Row, called out loudly at the gate that the whole procession was stopped, including the king's carriage, and demanded that the gates should be opened. The city marshal, rising in his saddle with the dignity befitting the greatness of the occasion, pompously replied that the gates should not be opened without the express order of the lord mayor. A general officer then came up, and urged the immediate opening of the gates for the king. The city marshal then consulted the lord mayor, who walked up to the gate and asked through the railing what was the pleasure of those gentlemen, when they repeated their request, to which the lord mayor replied, "If the king is approaching, I presume he is accompanied by Athlone, pursuivant-at-arms, and it is his duty to announce the approach of the king; I must therefore decline to have the city gates thrown open unless requested to do so by the proper authority." Hereupon the aide-de-camp galloped back at full speed, and a few minutes after returned with Athlone, flanked by two lancers. He was instantly challenged by the trumpeter stationed upon the top of the arch which surmounted the city gates. He required to be admitted to the presence of the lord mayor, to whom he rode up uncovered, and stated that by the command of the lord lieutenant he demanded entrance to the city of Dublin for his majesty king George IV. The lord mayor replied that he and every one of his fellow-citizens most heartily rejoiced that their gracious sovereign had condescended to honour the city with his presence; that the gates should be on the instant thrown open, and the corporation would wait with all humility to receive his majesty. Athlone then galloped back with the message; and all difficulty being thus got over, the procession moved forward in the following order:—A detachment of cavalry; an immense train of carriages, containing the nobility,

archbishop, bishops, the provost, fellows, and scholars of the university; a party of lancers, state trumpeters, king's messengers; the lord lieutenant's leading carriage, drawn by four horses, and carrying the maces; three other of his excellency's carriages, with his suite. When these entered the gates were again closed, and the same ceremony repeated, when they were again opened, and the king's leading carriage entered, drawn by six horses, each attended by a groom, and having two servants behind in superb liveries; a party of dragoons followed; next came the lord lieutenant in his own carriage, drawn by six horses; four aides-de-camp; his majesty's state carriage; four aides-de-camp; twenty-four servants, two by two, in full state liveries; the king, in an open carriage drawn by eight horses, each attended by a groom.

The moment his majesty entered the gate there was one loud burst of enthusiasm, which rolled along the masses down Sackville Street to Carlisle Bridge, and reverberated along the whole line to the castle. The scene presented to the king at this time was one of great splendour. Throughout one of the finest lines of streets in Europe, not only were the windows and balconies all filled with ladies and gentlemen in full dress, the roofs of all the houses were thickly covered, the streets at each side were thronged with people, two thin lines of soldiers keeping a passage clear in the middle for the procession. On the appearance of his majesty, all the hands struck up, "God save the king," and the immense multitude, with one consent, stood uncovered. He rose from his seat, and bowed his acknowledgments on each side, holding his hat in his hand, and repeatedly pointing to the immense bunch of shamrocks with which it was adorned, which seemed to have an electrical effect on the people, who acknowledged the national compliment by deafening plaudits. His majesty was met by the lord mayor, aldermen, sheriffs, common council, and the two city representatives, all uncovered, who successively approached the royal carriage, and made their obeisance. He immediately commanded them to rise, and at the same time stood up himself in the carriage, and addressing the lord mayor in the most gracious manner, expressed the happiness he felt on entering his "grand and loyal city of Dublin." The recorder, who was attired in his scarlet robes, hereupon stepped up to the door of his majesty's carriage, and addressed him on behalf of the city of Dublin. After some introductory remarks they said:—"That the monarch of the greatest empire upon earth, under whose paternal sway our rights, laws, and liberties have been most anxiously protected and secured, should, almost the instant after the crown had been placed upon his head, in performance of the august ceremony of his coronation, have ordered arrangements for his most gracious visit to Ireland, must to us, in common with the rest of our countrymen, be matter of just exultation and pride. But there is another consideration, sire, which gives additional interest to the present scene, and cannot but contribute to render this day for ever dear to the recollection of Irishmen. History informs us that some of your royal predecessors have visited this country, but the same authority obliges us to add, under untoward circumstances, and in periods of national agitation and disunion. How delightfully

contrasted the occasion upon which your majesty appears amongst us! In the person of you, royal sire, we behold the first monarch who has landed upon our shores to receive the enthusiastic homage of the entire island, and in the rapture of a nation's welcome, to partake of the happiness he communicates. You are now, sire, about to enter your ancient and loyal city of Dublin. The acclamations of assembled thousands accompany your majesty's advance. These are the richest offerings which love and gratitude can make, for they are the spontaneous bursts of the heart, and are sure to be received with a corresponding emotion by a sovereign whose first ambition has uniformly been to reign in the affections of all his people."

To which his majesty was pleased to make answer:—"That he was truly sensible of the faithful attachment of his loyal and good citizens of Dublin, and that it made a deep and indelible impression upon his heart." The lord mayor, kneeling, and bare-headed, delivered the keys and the city sword to his majesty. The king immediately redelivered them, saying, "My lord, I return these keys and this sword; they cannot be placed in better hands than yours."

The ceremonies at the barrier occupied about twenty minutes, during the greater part of which the king stood in his carriage uncovered, bowing in acknowledgment of the acclamations of the people. Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, one of his equerries, who had taken an active part in arranging the visit, remarked, "I humbly hope your majesty does not think I have any reason to be ashamed of my country to-day." To which his majesty replied, "No, indeed, Bloomfield. You may be proud of them—they are a noble people." At this point some of the lower order forced their way almost to the very door of the royal carriage, shouting, "God bless you! God bless you! Ireland loves you." To which he politely responded, "I love Ireland," placing his hand upon his breast, and waving his hat with the big bunch of shamrock. The procession moved forward, and the king was met with the same rapturous applause wherever he appeared. In Sackville Street he recognised the prince and princess Esterhazy in the windows of a drawing-room, for the use of which that day they paid fifty guineas. The veteran field-marshal, the marquis of Drogheda, was also recognised, and affectionately saluted, as he stood at the window of his own house, leaning on the back of a chair. The foreign ambassadors and their suites occupied balconies erected in front of the Post Office, which was superbly decorated. At twenty minutes past two o'clock the procession entered the castle gate, and was conducted to the presence chamber in that ancient seat of viceregal power. There earl Talbot, the lord lieutenant, kneeling before his majesty, presented to him the sword of state. The king, taking him by the hand, and bidding him rise, said, "I receive it, that I may again present it to you, my Talbot. I feel assured that I cannot commit it to better hands." The procession meantime halted. It was estimated that there were not less than twenty thousand gentlemen on horseback, each decorated with a pink or blue-coloured scarf or sash, with a "welcome medal," and bearing a baton in his hand, from which a flag or streamers floated in the air. The king, looking out

from the window on the dense masses, said, "I want words to tell how my heart responds to the affectionate feelings of this excellent and generous people. I shall love them for ever. They shall ever dwell in my thoughts and in my heart. I expected when I left England kind treatment from a people proverbially hospitable, and naturally grateful, but I was not prepared for this enthusiastic and affectionate welcome. I thought I knew my Irish subjects, but I find there was much room to know them better. They shall profit by my improved knowledge of them while ever I have life. The beauty of the city and the splendour of its buildings perfectly surprise me."

The king then received on the throne the address of the clergy, presented by the archbishops and bishops of the university—the first they had ever presented in English—and of the corporation, which was presented by the lord mayor, whom the king immediately created a baronet.

On Saturday there was a grand military review in Phoenix Park, which was a source of great attraction. The king appeared in full military uniform, mounted on a grey charger. He seemed delighted with the enthusiastic demonstrations of popular respect with which he was greeted. The troops passed in review before him. There was a great sham battle, with tremendous thundering of artillery, brilliant charges of cavalry, and admirable manœuvring of the infantry, which ended in the utter rout of "the enemy." The sun shone brightly on this magnificent show—bayonets, swords, and helmets reflecting its effulgence, and greatly heightening the pictorial effect. A thousand carriages, filled with ladies, declared by their admiring countrymen to be the most beautiful in Europe, surrounded the tract called the "fifteen acres," forming a broad circle, like a border of brilliant colours—the centre of one of the finest parks in the world, whose undulating surface, verdant and well-wooded, stretched away in the distance as far as the eye could see, the beautiful groups of deer being startled from their quiet propriety by the stunning peals of artillery and the clattering of horses' hoofs. The general adoption of the "welcome" costume gave the vast multitudes the appearance of one family. The king repeatedly signified his approbation of the fine condition of the troops, and the admirable precision of their evolutions.

On Sunday the king went in state to Christ's Church Cathedral, accompanied by the lord lieutenant, the duke of Montrose, lord Sidmouth, and the marquis of Londonderry, in full court dresses, his majesty appearing in the Windsor uniform. At the grand entrance he was received by the archbishop of Dublin, and conducted in procession to the royal pew, preceded by the choir and the dean and chapter, followed by the lord lieutenant and the lords in waiting. Nearly all the bishops mustered in the cathedral on this occasion, the service being chanted by the bishop of Kildare. The sermon was preached by the archbishop. The lord mayor and the recorder, followed by the city regalia, walked uncovered from the church to the Mansion House.

On Monday, the 20th, the king held a levée in Dublin Castle. For four hours the carriages continued to set down company in the castle yard. Upwards of two thousand gentlemen went on that occasion to do homage to

the king. He was dressed in a field marshal's uniform. After the levée he received addresses from the Roman catholic bishops, the presbyterians, and the society of friends, who suffered their hats to be removed before they entered the royal presence. For the first time since the revolution the Irish Roman catholic prelates had the privilege of standing before the throne of their sovereign. Their reception was most gracious and flattering. The deputation consisted of Dr. Curtis, Roman catholic primate of all Ireland; Dr. Troy, archbishop of Dublin; his coadjutor, Dr. Murray; Dr. O'Kelly, archbishop of Tuam; Drs. Plunket, Marum, Doyle, M'Guarin, Archdeacon, and Murphy. The address was carried by the primate, and handed to Dr. Murray, who had the honour of reading it to the king. The king read a reply, after which all the bishops in turn kissed his majesty's hand. The reply was endorsed, "His majesty's answer to the address of the Irish Roman catholic bishops." They were dressed in their episcopal robes, and wore golden crosses on their breasts. During the levée the marquis of Londonderry addressed the venerable Dr. Troy, and expressed his satisfaction at meeting him so little altered, after an absence of twenty years. When the marquis, as lord Castlereagh, was chief secretary in Ireland, working with tremendous energy to carry the union, he had very intimate relations with Dr. Troy. The latter wrote to him and to the under secretary, Mr. Cooke, many a communication, marked "most confidential," "strictly private," "most secret," with postscripts containing a request that they should be burned. But *litera scripta manet*, this most secret correspondence was carefully preserved in the archives of Dublin Castle, and many of the letters which the most reverend writer firmly believed were burned may now be read in the Castlereagh "Memoirs."

In their address, the Roman catholic prelates glanced at the past history of Ireland, when their monarchs approached its shores only in hostile array, driven to the necessity of conquering "a litigated sceptre by their arms." "For us," they add, "has been reserved the happier lot of welcoming for the first time a sovereign who comes to his people with the olive branch of peace in his hand, and with healing on his wing, to receive the willing and undivided allegiance of every individual within the wide range of his extended rule, the homage of the confidence and zealous attachment of all his subjects of every class and description. For ourselves and for the clergy of our communion, the spiritual pastors of four-fifths of the population of this portion of your majesty's dominions, we acknowledge the weighty debt of gratitude by which we are bound to your majesty's august house." They went on to state that they owed to him and his father the privilege of administering the rites of their religion, and the high honour of being permitted to stand in his presence. In the worst of times they had never failed, they said, to inculcate the duty of respectful deference to those placed in authority. The address proceeded:—"How many and how important are the additional inducements which must now stimulate our humble endeavours in the discharge of the same bounden duty, when, protected as we are by the legislation of our country, we have now the happiness, impelled by the most zealous attachment to your majesty's royal person, earnestly to im-

press upon the consciences of the whole Roman catholic community of this your majesty's realm the holy commandment of our blessed Redeemer of rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's."

This address was presented before the passing of catholic emancipation, when the exercise of the Roman catholic religion was barely tolerated. Since that time the church of Rome in Ireland has received a series of most important concessions. Roman catholics sit in the imperial parliament and upon the bench of justice,

deputation representing the synod of Ulster, the synod of Munster, and the presbytery of Antrim, which was read by the moderator of the synod of Ulster. They hailed his majesty as the first of our kings who ever visited that land in peace. Referring to William III., they drew an historical parallel:—"The last of glorious memory who landed on our shores—having rendered himself illustrious for maintaining the independence of Europe against a presumptuous despot, who aimed at universal dominion—came hither to recover and confirm our liberties, civil and religious, by the achievements of



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and receive a large proportion of the patronage of the state in every department. The priests are educated at the public expense, and the people are instructed gratuitously on the principle of religious equality and scrupulous respect for the rights of conscience. Yet, with all these privileges and advantages, some modern pastorals of the Roman catholic hierarchy are a perfect contrast in their spirit to the address presented to George IV. The most liberal concessions seem not to have had the effect anticipated by the statesmen who spent so many years in obtaining them.

The presbyterians—the third of the great religious denominations in Ireland—presented an address by a

war. Your majesty, after a conflict similar in its objects, but more arduous and desperate—equally protracted in its continuance, and brilliant in its conclusion—has arrived among your people of Ireland to foster and perpetuate the blessings of peace. As our ancestors endured every hardship and privation, and counted not their lives dear in the service of their great deliverer, so do we, their posterity, humbly proffer to your majesty the like devotion in defence of the dignity of your crown, and the independence of these nations. As they strenuously co-operated in the establishment of our matchless constitution, so would we make every sacrifice for the maintenance of the same under the auspices of your majesty."

They then referred to their having been "planted in the north for the civilisation of a rude and refractory province," and to the conduct of their progenitors, who uniformly supported the cause of religion, constitutional liberty, and monarchy, against arbitrary power, anarchy, and usurpation. They expressed thanks for the many favours they had received from the house of Hanover, and especially for "the munificent provision made for the support of their ministers." They took credit—and not without reason—for the exemplary conduct of their people, who have maintained the same character to the present day, for it is a rare thing to find an Ulster presbyterian in gaol. "The presbyterians of Ireland," they continued, "have become a numerous body, amounting to a million of people, who rank among the most industrious, intelligent, and peaceable of the inhabitants of this island; living together in harmony, and cultivating the good will of all their brethren; diligently instructed in their duties as citizens and subjects, and indissolubly united in loyalty to your majesty and your royal house." The king's answer to this address excited much interest, on account of the sentiment with which it concluded. "I have the fullest confidence," said his majesty, "in your faithful and firm attachment to my person and throne; and you may be assured of my constant protection of those civil and religious liberties which are the birthright of my people."

The address of the society of friends was characterised by the dignified simplicity and the practical philanthropy which are the habit and the aim of that estimable body of Christians. They observed that, although religiously restrained from demonstrating their feelings by public marks of rejoicing, they respectfully offered to the king a sincere and cordial welcome, and congratulated him upon his safe arrival. "We desire," they said, "that thy visit may not only tend to thy own satisfaction and the joy of thy people, but that an event so auspicious may promote the improvement of Ireland and her inhabitants, and thus render an important and lasting advantage to the empire." Acknowledging the many civil privileges they enjoyed, they thus concluded: "We desire for thee, O king, that thou mayest be enabled, under the influence of that grace which visits the hearts of all men, to rule in righteousness, and to be an instrument in the Divine hand to promote that state wherein all nations may join in the holy anthem, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'" The total number of addresses presented was two hundred and seventy.

There were some little incidents that occurred at the levée which may be worth recording as traits of Irish society. Lord Norbury, one of the judges, was famous for his propensity to punning, which he indulged on the most solemn occasions, even when passing sentence of death on a prisoner. "Lord Norbury's last" was a frequent heading in the Irish papers. At the levée his lordship fell when kneeling to kiss the king's hand; the king, having assisted him to rise, he remarked, "This is not the first *lift* your majesty has given me." On being told that the king was delighted by the reception he met with in Ireland, the witty lord remarked, "That Ireland was the place to get a

cordial reception." Some one having observed that the corporation should have got the streets better paved, in preparation for the king's visit, lord Norbury answered, "If they are ill paved they are well *flagged*."

Sir Frederick Flood was at the levée, though now between eighty and ninety years of age. The king complimented him on his youthful appearance, to which the venerable baronet replied, "I took out a new lease of my life on the 17th of August" (the day of the king's public entry into Dublin). The king often referred to this compliment in conversation with his courtiers. On Tuesday, the 21st, the king had a drawing-room at the castle, which was attended by numbers altogether unprecedented in Ireland. The presentations exceeded anything ever witnessed. The Irish ladies, forgetting and forgiving the treatment of the poor queen, were said to be intensely inspired with the ambition of getting a royal kiss. On Wednesday the royal visit to the theatre took place. The play and after-piece chosen by his majesty were "The Duenna," and "Patrick's Day," both from the pen of Sheridan. The king, who was received with great enthusiasm, sat out all the entertainments.

On Thursday he visited the Linen Hall, then an important place, but now deserted. He next paid a visit to the Bank of Ireland, formerly the parliament house, an edifice as chaste in its classic beauty as it is magnificent in its vast and symmetrical proportions. The preparations made for this visit by the commercial magnates of the city were on a splendid scale. He was received on his entrance by the governor, Mr. Arthur Guinness. A sumptuous *déjeuner* was laid out in the hall, which was formerly the peers' chamber. It is stated, however, that his majesty declined this entertainment, as he came to inspect the establishment, not to be feasted, and he was engaged for the grand corporation dinner in the evening. This was a most gorgeous affair. The Oak Saloon—since called the "king's room," at the Mansion House—is said to be unequalled in Europe. It resembles the circular court-yard of an Arabian palace, being one hundred feet in diameter, without any pillar or other support for the roof but the external walls. It was on this occasion surrounded by a gallery supported by arches springing from columns, and crowded by a circle of beauty and fashion.

The royal table formed an elevated crescent, over which from the gallery a superb canopy was thrown. Under this was placed a state chair for the king, to which he was conducted by the lord mayor, the company all rising as he entered. He was surrounded at the royal table by all the great dignitaries of church and state. The king's health, proposed by the lord mayor, was drunk with the most enthusiastic applause. His majesty retired at ten o'clock. The health of the marquis of Londonderry, among other toasts, was afterwards drank. In responding, the marquis said, "I hope that I do not indulge too much in the pride of an Irishman, when I say, as I truly may, that a pageant so splendid, in every way so magnificent, I have never witnessed in any country, as that which graced the public entrée of his majesty into the metropolis of Ireland, on the memorable 17th of August. Never did the national character display itself in a manner so honourable to the people.

Never did the warm hearts and the intelligent minds of Irishmen stamp upon the world the true value of their character in a manner so unequivocal or upon an occasion so memorable." The marquis added that he had no doubt that the country would improve, and he felt more satisfaction than he had language to express in assuring them that the present would not be the last visit which his majesty would pay to Ireland.

The marquis Conyngham subsequently stated that the king had expressed his determination to pay a triennial visit to Ireland, and to lay an injunction upon his successors to do likewise. When the lord mayor left the chair, alderman Beresford was called to it, and was asked to propose the standing toast of the corporation, "The glorious, pious, and immortal memory." This he firmly refused to do. He was then asked to propose the health of alderman Darley, which he did. The worthy alderman returned thanks, and concluded by giving the interdicted toast, for which he was near losing his salary of one thousand pounds a year as police magistrate, the king being highly indignant at this breach of the compact of conciliation with the Roman catholics.

"Thus ended," said a Dublin journal, "the corporation dinner, which, combining the splendour and magnitude of the preparations, the pomp and magnificence of the entertainment, and the dignity of the guests, with the refulgent charms of the fair spectators, never was equalled, and never will be surpassed in Ireland."

On Friday, the 24th, the king visited the Royal Dublin Society, at Leinster House, the lawn of which was covered with beautiful tents, ranged in semi-circular form round a magnificent marquee, where his majesty was entertained. Three harpers, robed in the antique garb of Irish minstrels, were stationed at the entrance of the tent. He was received by the members, about one hundred and fifty in number, all decorated with the insignia of welcome. The price of admission to this *fête champêtre* was five guineas for a member and two ladies.

The king having looked through the institution, hurried off to Slane Castle, the seat of the marquis Conyngham. He was escorted by a troop of cavalry as far as Finglas, where he dismissed half of them. He changed horses at Ashbourne, travelling at the rate of twelve English miles an hour, and, leaving all his suite far behind, he arrived at Slane at half-past four o'clock. The lord-lieutenant and a number of the nobility were asked there to meet him. On the following day he viewed the obelisk of Old Bridge, where the famous battle of the Boyne was fought, which secured the throne to his family. He was surrounded by thousands of the peasantry, his only guard being lady Conyngham and her daughter. On Sunday he went to Slane church, when he enjoyed another ovation.

Among the company invited to meet the king at Slane Castle was the lord chief justice Bushe, then solicitor-general. He and the attorney-general, Saurin, went down together, and had barely time to dress for dinner. He had never been seen by the king but once, at the levée. On going down stairs he met his majesty coming up. The *rencontre* was most embarrassing, but it was only for a moment. The king at once said, "Bushe, I believe you

don't know the ways of this house," and taking him under the arm, conducted him to the drawing-room. "In one moment," said Bushe, "I was as much at ease as if I had been his daily companion. I sat opposite to him at dinner. The first words he addressed to me were these (lady Conyngham, who sat next him, had been whispering something in his ear):—'Bushe, you would never guess what lady Conyngham has been saying to me; she has been repeating a passage from one of your speeches against the union.' He saw that I started, and was rather at a loss what to say, and instantly changed the subject by recommending me to try a particular French dish, from which he had been just helped. 'This,' said he, 'I can recommend as the perfection of cookery. My cousin, the duke of Gloucester, often produces it for his guests, but always fails in it. It is the same with all his dishes; he has a remarkable talent for giving bad dinners.' The king soon after returned to the union. 'My early opinion was,' said he, addressing Saurin, 'that you and the solicitor-general's opposition to the measure was well founded, and since I have seen this glorious people, and the effects produced by it, that opinion is confirmed; but,' he added, as if correcting himself, 'I am sure you will agree with me in considering that now the measure is carried you would both feel it your duty to resist any attempt to repeal it with as much zeal as you originally opposed it. But you all committed a great mistake. Instead of direct opposition, you should have made terms, as the Scotch did, and you could have got good terms.' He then summed up some of the principal stipulations of the Scotch union. He had history at his fingers' ends. Saurin said (a very odd remark, as it struck me, to come from him), 'And the Scotch further stipulated for the establishment of their national religion.' 'You are quite right,' said the king; 'they secured that point also, but——. No, no,' he added, hastily checking himself; 'you must pay no attention to what I have just said. It would not be right to have it supposed that I entertain an opinion from which inferences might be drawn that would afterwards lead to disappointment.' In the evening, dispatches arrived from England containing an account of the tumultuous proceedings at the queen's funeral. The king expressed, without the slightest reserve, his dissatisfaction at the want of energy shown by the government on the occasion, and contrasted it with the firmness of his father during the riots of 1780. He detailed the particulars of the late king's conduct upon that occasion, who, he said, expressly sent for him to be a witness of it, for the regulation of his own conduct upon any similar emergency. He concluded by suddenly saying, in an altered and broken voice, 'I shall never again see such a man as my father.' The king spoke of the run of luck that he had lately had; his getting round the Land's End just a few minutes before the wind changed, and his consequent arrival at Holyhead two days before the other vessels; his landing in Ireland on his birthday, which had been the wish of his heart; and finally, his glorious reception by the Irish people. Among the lucky incidents, he suppressed the news of the queen's death. The king's accent had the slightest intermixture of the foreign. He has been

known to say, 'I wish these catholics were damned or emancipated.' '*

On Monday, the 27th, the king returned to Dublin, and dined with the university. On his arrival, Dr. Barrett, the vice-provost, addressed him in a Latin speech. As usual, very costly preparations were made for his reception, this loyal and wealthy corporation being determined not to be outdone by any other body in Dublin. Among the other ornaments of the dining-hall was the organ, taken from the Spanish Armada, and presented to Trinity College by queen Elizabeth. It was put in repair for this occasion, and attracted no small attention, as the organ loft was occupied by seventy ladies of the highest distinction. An ode to the king, specially composed for the occasion, was sung at dinner. It was severely criticised by the London journals, one of which said that the Dublin University was called the "silent sister," but when she opened her mouth it was like Balaam's ass. It is said that the king was more at home among his academic subjects, and altogether more gratified and happy, than at any other public entertainment in Ireland.

On Tuesday, the 29th, the installation of the knights companions of the most illustrious order of St. Patrick took place in the cathedral.

The most memorable proceedings in the order under this, its second sovereign, were the creation of extra knights, and the circumstance of his majesty having held an investiture and installation in person in the capital of his Irish dominions. In January, 1820, the order lost its most illustrious companion by the death of his royal highness the duke of Kent, earl of Dublin; and two other stalls became void in that year by the decease of the earl of Roden, in June, and of the marquis of Ormond, in August. The chancellor, Dr. Cleaver, archbishop of Dublin, dying in December, 1819, Dr. lord John Beresford, his successor in the archiepiscopal see, was invested as chancellor on the 26th of May, 1820.

Another prince of the blood royal was soon after given to the order in place of the duke of Kent, by the election of the sovereign's brother, Ernest Augustus, duke of Cumberland, Teviotdale, earl of Armagh, knight of the garter, and knight of the grand cross of the orders of the Bath and Guelph, afterwards king of Hanover. The two other vacant ribands were conferred upon George Augustus Chichester, second marquis of Donegal, and Du Pre Alexander, second earl of Caledon.

At the coronation, in July, 1821, his majesty was pleased to dispense with the statutes, and to declare the six following noblemen extra knights of the order, namely:—Talbot, then lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and grand master of the order; Ormond, Meath, Fingal, Courtown, and Roden. Before the appointment of earl Talbot, no instance had occurred of the grand master, or of a peer of England, who was not also a peer of Ireland, having been elected a knight of the order. The duke of Cumberland was invested by his proxy, Lord Graves, who was knighted on that occasion; and all the other knights elect, except the earl of Caledon, were knighted and invested. On the 28th of the

same month, the sovereign presided in person at an installation in St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the nine knights elect were installed with the usual ceremonies in the following order:—the duke of Cumberland, who was represented by his proxy, lord Graves, the marquis of Donegal, earl of Caledon, earl Talbot, earl of Ormond, earl of Meath, earl of Fingal, earl of Courtown, and earl of Roden. His majesty appointed the earl of Clanricarde (who was afterwards elected a knight of the order), the earl of Bective (eldest son of the marquis of Headford, K.P.), and the earl of Mount Charles (eldest son of the marquis Conyngham, K.P.), his esquires; and his train was borne by the sons of six other peers of Ireland.

The ceremony, to use the words of a contemporary journal, was "of matchless splendour, and had a magical effect, removing for a moment the curtains of time, and transporting the imagination to the golden days of chivalry and romance."

During the installation his majesty occupied the archiepiscopal throne; the installed knights sat in their respective stalls, their esquires seated before them. The knights elect sat in front of their several stalls, having also their esquires before them, and the prelate, chancellor, and other officers took the seats prepared for them. It was intended that the procession should, as in 1809 and 1819, proceed from the castle to the cathedral on foot, but in consequence of the state of the weather the knights, esquires, and other officers went in carriages. At the banquet in St. Patrick's Hall, the knights companions sat at the sovereign's table, which crossed the hall, according to the order of their stalls, together with the prelate, chancellor, and registrar. There were also two tables running down the hall, which were occupied by the nobility and other persons of distinction, who had been specially invited, the lord mayor presiding at the one, and the general commanding the forces at the other. The sovereign's esquires attended behind his majesty; the king of arms stood immediately on the right hand of the sovereign; the secretary stood behind the prelate; the genealogist behind the chancellor, and the usher behind the registrar's chair; and the esquires stood behind their respective knights, where they remained during the first course. When it had ended, all the knights companions and officers rose, and Ulster, attended by the officers of arms, having retired to the bottom of the hall, advanced up the centre between the two tables, making their reverences to the sovereign, and, after a flourish of trumpets, he proclaimed that "the knights companions of the most illustrious order of St. Patrick drank to the sovereign's health." "God save the king" having been sung, Ulster shortly after proclaimed that "the sovereign did the knights of St. Patrick the honour to drink their health," the band playing "St. Patrick's day." After this, Ulster announced that "the knights companions drank the health of his royal highness the duke of York, and of the royal family." Ulster, with the officers of arms, then retired down the hall, each taking their respective stations; and shortly after the sovereign dispensed with the further attendance of the esquires, officers of the order, and the officers of arms, when they proceeded to the apartments where dinner was provided for them. After the dessert, the

sovereign rose, touched his hat, and gave for a toast "The loyal corporation of the city of Dublin." His majesty retired at half-past seven o'clock, attended by the lord-lieutenant and his suite; but on the return of his excellency the festivities continued, and "his majesty's happy return to Dublin, and peace and prosperity to Ireland," and other toasts, were drank with enthusiasm. The general effect of the spectacle is said to have been most splendid; and the installation of the knights of St. Patrick on that occasion will always form a memorable event in the history of Ireland. While his majesty remained in Dublin, he constantly wore the star, riband, and badge of the order of St. Patrick, and usually appeared with a shamrock in his hat.

On the 30th the installation ball took place at the Rotunda, the round room of which accommodates about two thousand persons. This was the great day for the ladies, and so we read that the gallant knights of St. Patrick entertained the most illustrious and beautiful women in the land in a style worthy of the Irish nobility, and in such a manner as induced the king to declare that in all he beheld there was so much of splendour, taste, "and," turning to the ladies, "of beauty too, he never witnessed a more charming scene." At the basement of each column, between the windows, mirrors were suspended, which, reflecting in every direction the rich and costly ornaments and the vast assemblage of rank, fashion, and beauty, gave the scene the appearance of some magic structure in oriental romances. The king arrived at ten o'clock, and dancing immediately commenced. It seems the ladies were so overawed by his presence that they became nervous and confused, and forgot their evolutions. At all events, his majesty ungallantly remarked that in whatever else the Irish excelled, they had no pretensions to dancing. He withdrew at eleven o'clock. At one, nine hundred persons sat down to supper, furnished with all that was most excellent in gastronomic art.

On Friday, the 31st, the sovereign paid his promised visit to the Curragh of Kildare, driving rapidly under triumphal arches, amidst the cheers of the peasantry, and followed by the duke of Leinster, and many other noblemen and gentlemen, with their tenantry, mounted and carrying banners. The people at the Curragh that day are said to have numbered one hundred and twenty thousand, who all assembled round the stand house, and welcomed the king with a thundering shout. After the races there was a grand banquet at two o'clock. Before his departure the king presented the duke of Leinster with a costly whip, stating that he intended that it should be awarded to the owner of the best horse in Ireland, to be run for every year with a stake of a hundred guineas, heavy weight to be carried, in order to encourage the breed of strong horses. The turf club distributed fifty barrels of ale among the peasantry on that day, and they had liberated a week before all that were confined for debt in the county, for sums under fifty pounds, thus making a jubilee of the king's visit.

On Sunday, the 2nd of September, the king attended divine service at the Chapel Royal, Dublin Castle, when the sermon was preached by Dr. Magee, the son of a pres-

byterian minister, then bishop of Raphoe, afterwards archbishop of Dublin, who created great ecclesiastical commotion subsequently by a charge, in which he said "the Roman catholics have a church without a religion—the dissenters have a religion without a church." On this day lord Kinsale asserted his hereditary right of appearing before the king with his hat on.

On Monday, the 3rd, the king took his departure from Ireland. On his way to Dunleary he paid a visit to lord Powerscourt, driving with his usual rapidity through Dundrum, the Scalp, Enniskerry, and arriving at Powerscourt at three o'clock. Triumphal arches were erected at several points on the road. Among the noblemen there invited to meet him was the earl of Fingall, the chief of the Roman catholic peers. The king, laying his hand on his shoulder, said, "To-morrow you shall see my letter; I think it will please you." A banquet awaited him in the grand saloon of that princely mansion. Entering with the dowager lady Powerscourt leaning on his arm, he ordered the superb chair of state to be removed, and took an ordinary one. He was pleased to take wine with many of the company, and altogether made himself very agreeable. A melody, written by Thomas Moore, for the prince of Wales's birthday, in 1810, was sung on this occasion with great effect. The following stanza, however, was omitted:—

"Contempt on the minion who calls you disloyal!"

Tho' fierce to your foe, to your friends you are true;

The tribute most high to a head that is royal

Is the love from the heart that loves liberty too

While cowards who blight

Your fame your right,

Would shrink from the blaze of battle array,—

The standard of green

In front would be seen,—

Oh, my life on your faith! were you summoned this minute,

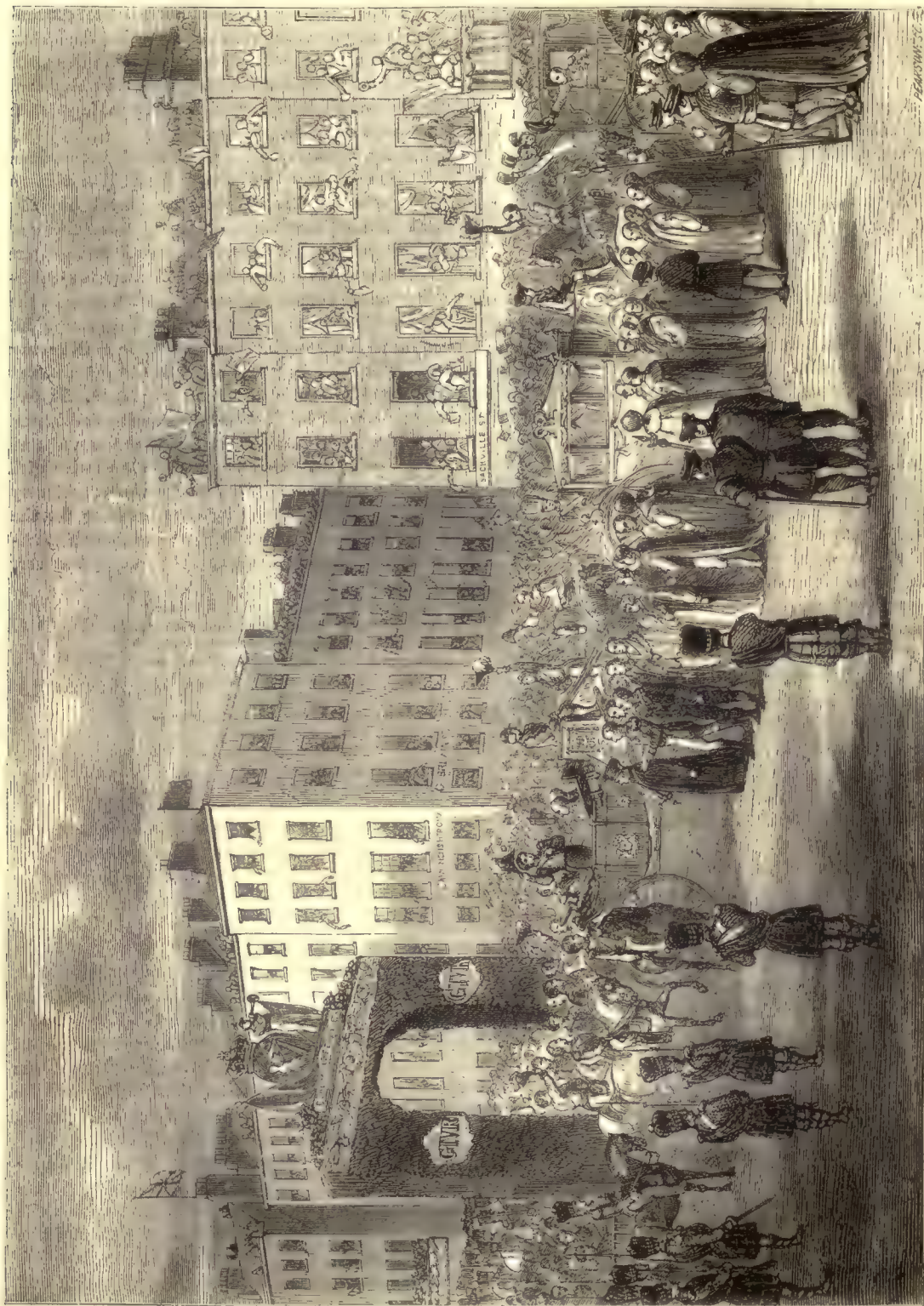
You would cast every bitter remembrance away,

And show what the arm of old Erin has in it.

When roused by the foe on her prince's birthday."

It being announced that his carriage was ready, lord Powerscourt proposed a bumper to his safe return to England. He returned thanks, expressing the delight he had experienced during his stay in Ireland, and particularly on that day. His majesty reached Dunleary at seven o'clock, finding the road for two miles covered with a train of carriages, and crowds on foot. About Dunleary every one of the surrounding eminences was crowded with people, all conducting themselves with the most perfect order. The pier, nearly an English mile in length, was occupied by persons of distinction. The harbour and the offing were literally covered by vessels of war, royal yachts, pleasure boats, and a vast number of small craft.

The king was received on alighting by the lord-lieutenant, the lord mayor, and other official personages. He was in the undress of the Windsor uniform, with white trousers and a round hat. The lord mayor presented him with an address from the inhabitants of Dublin, in which it was stated that at his approach discord ceased and every prejudice fled, and that he had vanquished every bad passion in six millions of the Irish people (which, if real, would have been certainly the most important victory ever achieved by any British king)—"a victory," they said, "much more deserving of the laurel crown, now most



ENTRY OF GEORGE IV INTO DUBLIN. COPIED BY PERMISSION OF SIR BERNARD BURKE, ULSTER KING OF ARMS. (FROM A PRINT IN HIS POSSESSION).

respectfully presented to your majesty (and intended with all humility to be replaced by one of emeralds) than any of those blood-stained triumphs which have heretofore been honoured by the wreath of the conqueror."

Upon receiving the address, his majesty seemed much affected, and he expressed himself to the following purport:—"Gentlemen, I approached your shores with pleasure; I now quit them with regret. May God Almighty bless you all until we again meet."

Mr. O'Connell, at the head of a deputation of ten, then approached the king, and on his knees presented him with a laurel crown. His name had been announced by Lord Sidmouth, and his majesty took particular notice of him, shook him cordially by the hand, and accepted the tribute in a manner which indicated that he was much gratified by the gift. This occurred in a tent which had been

I can serve Ireland, I shall seize on it with eagerness. I am a man of few words: short adieux are best. God bless you, my friends. God bless you all." He then descended the sloping avenue that led to the royal barge, and jumped into it with great activity. At this moment the police were swept from their stations by the surging multitude, which the attraction of royalty seemed to draw irresistibly into the sea. Four gentlemen clung to the rudder for a considerable time; three of them fell into the water and swam ashore, having their loyalty considerably cooled: another held fast till the king ordered him to be lifted on board. The crowd was so immense that the difficulty of retiring was inconceivable. Files of hussars had to keep the road open for the return of the carriages of the lord-lieutenant; pedestrians were obliged to creep for fifty yards under the necks of horses; many of the public



KEY TO ENTRY OF GEORGE IV. INTO DUBLIN.

1. The Rotunda. 2. Lady Mountjoy, Mrs. Stewart, Hon. Mrs. Knox, Mrs. Arthur Dawson, and party. 3. Residence of Sir Kingston James, Bart., Lord Mayor Elect. 4. Temporary Barrier. Irish Motto (English), "A Hundred Thousand Welcomes." 5. Countess of Caledon, Lady Blayney, Lady Elizabeth Alexander, Lady Strange, and party. 6. Countess of Farnham, Countess Belmore, Lady Aylmer, Lady Baird, and party. 7. Prince and Princess Esterhazy, Marchioness of Conyngham, and party. 8. Duchess of Leinster, Marchioness of Downshire, Countess of Antrim, Lady Ennismore, Prince Larderia, Vicomte Chabot, and party. 9. The 3rd Light Dragoons, followed by country Gentlemen and Citizens, on horseback and on foot, in regular procession, with flags, &c. &c. 10. Colonel Lindsey, 78th Highlanders. 11. Lord Aylmer, Adjutant-General. 12. Lieutenant-General Lord Beresford, G.C.B. 13. Sir George Quentin, K.C.H., Aide-de-Camp to his Majesty. 14. Sir D. Baird, G.C.B., &c. &c., Commander of the Forces. 15. Lieutenant-General Lord Blaney. 16. Lieutenant-General Sir E. T. Hammond, K.C.H., and Chief Equerry and Clerk Marshal. 17. General Lord Howden, G.C.B. 18. Major-General Sir Colquhoun Grant, K.C.B., Commanding Leinster District. 19. Major-General Sir John Elley, K.C.B., Commanding Connaught District. 20. Lord Burgher, Aide-de-Camp to his Majesty. 21. Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Bolton, K.C.H., King's Equerry. 22. Major-General Bayly, King's Equerry. 23. His Majesty. 24. Marquis of Winchester, Groom of the Stole. 25. Marquis of Headfort, Lord in Waiting. 26. The 78th Highlanders. 27. Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, Private Secretary to his Majesty. 28. Ulster King of Arms, Sir W. Betham. 29. Lord Mayor's State Coach in Waiting. 30. Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Arthur Hill, Aide-de-Camp to the Lord Lieutenant. 31. Earl Talbot, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, preceded by the principal Officers, Lords Spiritual and Temporal, Baronets, Law Officers, Members of the University, Clergy, &c. &c. in their several equipages. 32. City Sword-bearer, Sir James Riddal. 33. City Mace-bearer, Richard Quinton, Esq. 34. First Water Bailiff, Mr. Francis Thorne. 35. City Marshal (with the Keys), J. Stanley, Esq. 36. Second Water Bailiff, Mr. A. Mitchell. 37. City High Constable, Mr. J. Dooley. 38. First City Member, Sir Robert Shaw, Bart. 39. First City Sheriff, Sir George Whitford. 40. Lord Mayor of Dublin, Sir A. B. King, Bart. 41. City Chaplain, Rev. George Blacker. 42. Recorder (with Address), Sir Jonas Greene. 43. Second City Member, Thomas Ellis, Esq. 44. City Sheriff, Sir Nicholas Bradey. 45. Aldermen who had served as Lord Mayor. 46. Aldermen who had not served. 47. Sheriffs, Peers, &c. &c. 48. His Majesty's Footmen. 49. Royal Battle-axe Guards. 50. City ditto.

erected for the accommodation of the king. Mr. O'Connell was loudly cheered as he retired from the royal presence. When about to embark, his majesty, appearing much affected, addressed those around him, saying, "My friends, when I arrived in this beautiful country my heart overflowed with joy; it is now depressed with sincere sorrow. I never felt sensations of more delight than since I came to Ireland; I cannot expect to feel any superior, nor many equal, till I have the happiness of seeing you again. Whenever an opportunity offers wherein

houses had to shut up because their stock of liquors was exhausted; and water was sold at threepence a quart. The car-drivers, of course, availed themselves of this golden opportunity, and in many cases got from ten shillings to a pound for a sixpenny jaunt.

The royal squadron was detained for several days by unfavourable weather. On the 9th it reached Milford Haven; and on the 15th his majesty arrived at his palace in Pall Mall, after an absence of forty days, twenty-two of which were spent in Ireland. The day after the king's

embarkation the following letter appeared in the newspapers :—

“Dublin Castle, Sept. 3, 1821.

“My Lord,—The time of the king's departure from Ireland being arrived, I am commanded by his majesty to express his entire approbation, of the manner in which all persons, acting in civil and military situations in the city of Dublin and its neighbourhood, have performed their several duties during the period of his majesty's residence in this part of the kingdom.

“His majesty is pleased to consider that to your excellency his acknowledgments are particularly due. He is conscious of how much he owes to your excellency's attention and arrangements; and his majesty gladly avails himself of this occasion of declaring the high sense which he entertains of the ability, temper, and firmness with which your excellency has uniformly administered the great trust which he has placed in your hands.

“I am further commanded to state that the testimonies of dutiful and affectionate attachment which his majesty has received from all classes and descriptions of his Irish subjects, have made the deepest impression, and that he looks forward to the period when he shall re-visit them with the strongest feeling of satisfaction. His majesty trusts that in the meantime not only the spirit of loyal union which now so generally exists will remain unabated and unimpaired, but that *every cause of irritation may be avoided and discountenanced*, mutual forbearance and goodwill observed and encouraged, and a security be thus afforded for the continuance of that concord amongst themselves which is not less essential to his majesty's happiness than to their own, and which it has been the chief object of his majesty's, during his residence in this country, to cherish and promote.

“His majesty well knows the generosity and warmth of heart which distinguish the character of his faithful people in Ireland; and he leaves them with a heart full of affection towards them, and with a confident and gratifying persuasion that this parting admonition and injunction of their sovereign will not be given in vain.—I have the honour to be, with great truth and regard, my lord, your excellency's most obedient and faithful servant, SIDMOUTH.—To his excellency the lord lieutenant,” &c. &c.

This letter produced a feeling of the highest gratification in the public mind, and nothing was thought of but the erection of some great national monument to commemorate the royal visit. Various meetings were held upon the subject, and different plans were eagerly proposed and keenly discussed. The majority were for erecting a magnificent palace, fit for his majesty's reception when he should honour the country again with his presence. Mr. O'Connell stated at a public meeting that he had subscribed twenty guineas for a memorial, but should a palace be decided on, he would give a hundred guineas more, and fifty pounds a year until it was finished. A most influential committee of noblemen and gentlemen was appointed to raise funds, and the most comprehensive arrangements were made for a grand national tribute. But the fever of loyalty was too violent to last. The excitement very soon subsided; the subscriptions, which were expected to flow in

rapid streams, did not come in; and the only memorial of the visit of George IV. is a diminutive obelisk surmounted by a crown, resting, with a look of instability, on four small globular stones like cannon balls, on the spot from which he embarked, with an inscription recording the event. The town itself, however, is the best monument of the visit. The name was changed from Dunleary to Kingstown.

Forty years have made great changes in Ireland; and perhaps the improvements effected since the visit of George IV. could not be more strikingly represented than by the transformation effected in the harbour where he landed. Dunleary was then a mere fishing village on the coast of Dublin Bay, about seven miles from the city; now it is a large and beautiful town, with commodious quays, magnificent piers, a railway from Dublin, with trains every half-hour, a splendid mail boat to Holyhead twice a day, conveyed by steamers far superior to any that cross the Channel between England and the Continent, the mail train running down to the side of the boat. Kingstown would not be known now by an inhabitant of old Dunleary; it looks like a continuation of the metropolis; the country for miles round is covered with handsome villas, the residences of the prosperous citizens who go in to business daily by the railway.

If the scandalous gossip of the court may be trusted, the king did not allow affairs of state and public displays or the death of the queen to wean him even for a week from his attachment to lady Conyngham. Mr. Freemantle, a rather cynical commentator on public affairs, wrote as follows :—

“Lady C. has been almost constantly at the Phoenix Park, but has not appeared much in public.” Again, the same writer remarks, “I never in my life heard of anything equal to the king's infatuation and conduct towards lady Conyngham. She lived exclusively with him during the whole time he was in Ireland at the Phoenix Park. When he went to Slane, she received him dressed out as for a drawing-room; he saluted her, and they then retired alone to her apartments. A yacht is left to bring her over, and she and the whole family go to Hanover. I hear the Irish are outrageously jealous of her, and though courting her to the greatest degree, are loud in their indignation at lord C. This is just like them. I agree in all you say about Ireland. As there is no chance of the boon being granted, no lord-lieutenant could have a chance of ingratiating himself, or of fair justice done him, with the king's promises and flattery.”*

The king had a stormy and rather perilous passage across the Channel. Of this voyage and its dangers he gave himself a graphic description :—“We sailed again yesterday morning,” writes his majesty, “between four and five o'clock, with a most promising breeze in our favour to make the Land's End. About two or three in the evening the wind shifted immediately in our teeth. A violent hurricane and tempest suddenly arose; the most dreadful possible of nights and of scenes ensued, the sea breaking everywhere over the ship. We lost the tiller, and the

* Buckingham's “Memoirs,” vol. I., pp. 194–200.

vessel was for some minutes down on her beam ends; and nothing, I believe, but the undaunted presence of mind, perseverance, experience, and courage of Paget preserved us from a watery grave. The oldest and most experienced of our sailors were petrified and paralysed. You may judge somewhat, then, of what was the state of most of the passengers; every one almost flew up in their shirts upon deck in terrors that are not to be described.*

Mr. W. H. Freemantle sarcastically alludes to the feelings of the royal passenger in connection with this voyage:—"The king in his journey home overtook lord and lady Harcourt, now the bosom friends of lady Conyngham, stopped them, got out of his carriage, and sat with them for a quarter of an hour on the public road, recounting all his perilous adventures at sea, and flattering reception in Ireland. Lady Harcourt told me his *pious acknowledgment* for his great escape of being shipwrecked was quite edifying, and the very great change in his moral habits and religious feelings was quite astonishing, and all owing to lady Conyngham."† "I cannot help suspecting," observes another letter writer of the time, "that his majesty's late journey to see his kingdoms of Ireland and Hanover will not on the whole redound much to his honour or advantage. His manners are no doubt, when he pleases, very graceful and captivating; no man knows better how to add to an obligation by the way of conferring it; but on the whole he wants dignity, not only in the seclusion and familiarity of his more private life, but on public occasions. The secret of popularity in very high stations seems to consist in a somewhat reserved and lofty, but courteous and uniform behaviour. Drinking toasts, shaking people by the hand, and calling them Jack and Tom, gets more applause at the moment, but fails entirely in the long run. He seems to have behaved not like a sovereign coming in pomp and state to visit a part of his dominions, but like a popular candidate come down upon an electioneering trip. If, the day before he left Ireland, he had stood for Dublin, he would, I dare say, have turned out Shaw or Grattan."‡

On the 30th of August the duke of Montrose wrote from Dublin Castle to lord Eldon, giving the most glowing account of the effects of the royal visit. "All has passed in this country," he writes, "with the most complete success, and it is generally expected that not only this country but the whole empire may reap lasting advantages from his majesty's visit, whilst the striking, gracious, and graceful manner in which the king has conducted all public displays is remarkable. It is not a little remarkable, also, the command over themselves which the whole nation have had, from the highest to the lowest; and men assure me they hardly know the people, under the restraint and manner which they have imposed upon themselves since the residence of his majesty amongst them. It is an extraordinary circumstance, deserving of

attention, and which, had I not seen it, I could not have believed. At the theatre, though full of enthusiasm, they had a quietness and a desire to conduct themselves with propriety I never saw before. I have seen no drunkenness, no unregulated marks of loyalty and affection in the city; elsewhere, indeed, they have pressed upon the king, to see and to touch him, a little inconveniently, and marked, perhaps, with some superstition, as if some good would happen to them in some way or other from having touched the king or his clothes."

The duke evinces shrewdness and penetration when he observes that he cannot attribute all this to abstract affection, and that though they were grateful for his majesty's visit, he had no doubt "that expectation of further advantages had great influence on their feelings and conduct." He was right; their gratitude referred more to favours to come than to favours past; and when the expected favours did not come, it was found that the gratitude had given place to a feeling of a very different character. The king seems to have been quite as much intoxicated with joy as the Irish nation. It was love at first sight, and of the most ardent description:

The mutual flame was quickly caught,
And quickly, too, revealed;
For neither bosom lodged a wish
That virtue keeps concealed."

The duke of Montrose continues:—"The manner in which his majesty has been received has had a great effect on his majesty's feelings, and requires discretion not to hurry his majesty into expressions which discretion may lament, or into comparisons more open, perhaps, than politic; also, perhaps, into grounds of expectation and hope which can hardly be realised. However, I have not seen anything which does not do honour to the feelings of the people and of the king. I think lord Sidmouth is on his guard, and most important it is for his majesty, or any king, on such occasions, to have men of experience and high in the state near his person." The whole of the royal party were evidently much pleased, and agreeably disappointed, with Dublin. The duke proceeds—"I have been surprised with this city, its superior inhabitants, and the taste and order with which their displays have been made; and I observe the clergy stand more conspicuous and forward in high society in this place than anywhere, except at Rome. This must become a much greater country than it is, though it certainly wants capital and the residence of its nobility and gentry; the latter will secure the increase of the former, though time must be required, under the most favourable circumstances; and the Irish flatter themselves the king's visit will encourage and promote that desirable object." It is interesting to remark the effect produced by the state of agriculture at that time upon the mind of a Scotch peer. "The country," he says, "appears to be cultivated without capital; no good farm-houses, nor any farm-yards, nor stock-yards, are to be seen in this part of Ireland. The land appears to be let too high; to be very little manured; ploughed, and when exhausted left to rest; but naturally productive, and capable of improvement. I only speak of the land near Dublin."

* Knighton's Memoirs, p. 94.

† Buckingham's Memoirs, vol. I., p. 202.

‡ Lord Dudley's Letters, p. 295.

CHAPTER VII.

The King's Visit to Hanover—Political Intrigues of Lady Conyngham—Seclusion of the Sovereign—Opening of Parliament—The Royal Speech—The State of Ireland—Ministerial Changes—the Grenville Party—Mr. Peel, Home Secretary; Lord Wellesley, Irish Viceroy; Mr. Plunket, Irish Attorney-General; Mr. Goulburn, Chief Secretary—Coercion in Ireland—The Irish Famine—English Munificence—Duplicity of the King on the Catholic Disabilities—Mr. Canning's Bill for the admission of Roman Catholic Peers to the House of Lords—Parliamentary Reform—Lord John Russell—Agricultural Distress: Parliamentary Inquiry on the Subject; Remedies proposed—Financial Operations—The Sinking Fund—Cash Payments—The Press in Scotland—Navigation Laws—Bishop Marsh—The Law of Marriage; its Reform strenuously resisted by Lord Eldon—Dependence of Members of Parliament—Suicide of Lord Londonderry: its Causes; his Character and Career as a Statesman; his Funeral—The King's Visit to Scotland—His Reception at Edinburgh—Sir Walter Scott—The Highland Clans—Public Entry into the City—The Levée Festivities—The Civic Banquet—The King's Return.

THE cup of adulation which the king had quaffed so freely in Ireland seems to have created an appetite for repeated draughts of the same kind; for he had scarcely arrived at Carlton House when he began to make preparations for another excursion. He reached London on the 15th of September, and on the 22nd we find him embarking at Ramsgate on his way to visit his kingdom of Hanover. After a rough passage, he arrived safely at Calais, travelling with a Hanoverian title. Thence he proceeded through Lisle, Brussels, Aix-la-Chapelle, Dusseldorf, and Minden.

When at Brussels, the king, attended by prince Frederick of Holland, the duke of Wellington, and lord Clancarty, rode to the field of Waterloo. The weather was bad, but it did not in the least damp his ardour. He went into the little church in the village, examined all the tablets on the walls, visited the willow tree under which was buried the shattered limb of lord Anglesea, and seemed greatly impressed with all around him. He carefully examined every position, and did not leave the field till he was master of all the details of the great decisive battle. On the 5th of October he entered Osnaburg, where he received an enthusiastic welcome from the inhabitants, not only as their sovereign, but as the brother of their royal bishop, the duke of York. The burgo-masters and citizens voted him an address full of loyalty, to which he replied most graciously, stating that he should always entertain a grateful recollection of the flattering manner in which he was received. Next day the chief men of the city had the honour of dining with him, and were assured by him that he could not express the joy he felt at finding himself on the native soil of his illustrious ancestors.

He had certainly every reason to be pleased with the manifestations of their loyalty. All the streets through which he passed were strewn with flowers and evergreens. Every village, too, had triumphal arches erected, with appropriate inscriptions, "all bearing evident marks of real religion." The pastor, in his robes, is described as standing with his whole flock on either side, the women carrying their Bibles under their arms.*

Having reviewed a regiment of Hanoverian troops, his majesty took his departure from Osnaburg, and proceeding

on his journey, was met at Nienburg by the dukes of Cumberland and Cambridge. There he found a sumptuous banquet prepared for him in the court-house, at which the three royal brothers were entertained. The king, who seems to have always given himself up wholly to the enjoyment of the present scene, if it was one that gratified his feelings, declared there, as he had done in Ireland, that it was the "happiest day of his life," and he assured his Hanoverian subjects that the desire to promote their prosperity should always be the predominant feeling of his heart.

On the 11th of October a salute of one hundred and one guns announced his majesty's entrance into the capital of his German kingdom. It was the first time that his phlegmatic subjects had seen their king, and they were roused by the interest and novelty of the event to an extraordinary pitch of excitement. Even the Irish did not give themselves up to wilder excesses of joy. And here, also, the presence of the condescending and affable sovereign had a magical effect in promoting conciliation among classes and parties. The Hanoverians were gratified by a grand public procession, in which the king appeared in an open carriage drawn by eight cream-coloured horses. His majesty's love of show and pomp was gratified, despite the murmurs of economists, with another coronation. The whole city was illuminated on this occasion, and the royal brothers went forth in the streets, amidst the admiring people, to contemplate the scene which so brilliantly illustrated the glory of their race.

One of the ten days the king spent in Hanover was devoted to a hunt, conducted in the German fashion; the huntsmen and peasants form themselves into a circle, embracing an extended area, which is gradually contracted till the game are driven upon the centre, where the sportsmen are stationed, when the *battue* commences. On this occasion his majesty was amused by the slaughter of two thousand three hundred and twenty-six head of game. During the time he spent there the succession of public festivals and private entertainments was interrupted by an attack of the gout. The deputations from public bodies vied with one another in the high-flown language of adulation. As in Dublin he appeared with a huge bunch of shamrock in his hat, so in Hanover he flattered the people by wearing only the Guelphic order. Some hundreds of miners from the mountains came one day to serenade their king. They are a peculiar race, of Saxon origin, and for centuries have preserved their customs, language, and manners. They are very religious. "They sang," says Knighton, "with a band of music, two of the most beautiful hymns I ever heard." These miners had walked thirty miles for the purpose of paying their devotion to their sovereign. At Göttingen a tournament was got up for the king's entertainment, and an address was presented by the authorities that affected him to tears. Of the visits he paid to different portions of his dominions he appears to have enjoyed this the most thoroughly.

On his return to London, the king devoted himself to a life of seclusion for a considerable time, during which it

* Knighton's *Memoirs*, p. 106.

appears that the marchioness of Conyngham maintained an ascendancy over him most damaging to his character and government. She had not only made the royal favour tributary to the advancement of her own family, but she meddled in political affairs with mischievous effect. "Had it been confined to mere family connections, no voice, perhaps, would have been raised against it; but when the highest offices in the church were bestowed on persons scarcely previously heard of—when political parties rose and fell, and ministers were created and deposed to gratify the ambition of a female—then the palace of the king appeared as if surrounded by some pestilential air. The old hereditary counsellors of the king avoided the court, as alike fatal to private probity and public honour. The entrance to Windsor Castle was, as it were, hermetically sealed by the enchantress within to all but the favoured few. The privilege of the *entrée* was curtailed to the very old friends of the king, and even the commonest domestics in the castle were constrained to submit to the control of the marchioness. The court of George IV. certainly differed widely from that of Charles II., although the number and reputation of their several mistresses were nearly the same in favour and character; but George IV. had no confiscations to confer on the instruments of his pleasures. . . . Yet, if it be true that the king left to the marchioness more than half a million of money, the outrage is morally the same as if estates had been alienated, or titles bestowed to gratify her ambition."*

Thus passed the winter of 1821-22. Parliament met on the 5th of February for the transaction of business, and was opened by the king in person. In his speech from the throne he expressed regret for the agricultural distress that prevailed in England; and he had the unpleasant task imposed upon him of referring to a state of things in Ireland the reverse of what might have been expected from his conciliation policy—"a spirit of outrage" that had led to daring and systematic violations of the law which he submitted to the consideration of parliament. In the house of lords the address was adopted without opposition. In the commons amendments were proposed by Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Hume, which were rejected by large majorities. The state of Ireland was the first subject that occupied the attention of the legislature. A salutary change had been effected in the executive of that country. Lord Talbot, the late viceroy, was a man of narrow and exclusive spirit, wedded to the régime of protestant ascendancy. But according to a system of counterpoise which had been adopted in the Irish government, his influence was checked by his chief secretary, Mr. Charles Grant, a man of large mind, enlightened principles, and high character. This system tended to keep the rival parties in a state of conflict, and naturally weakened the authority of the government. A modification in the English cabinet led to corresponding changes in Ireland. The spirit of discontent among the commercial classes in England induced lord Liverpool to enter into a compromise with the Grenville-Wynn

party, and the marquis of Buckingham, its chief, was created a duke; lord Sidmouth retired from the home office, and was succeeded by Mr. Peel; the marquis Wellesley became lord-lieutenant of Ireland; while Mr. Plunket, a man of liberal politics and transcendent abilities, was appointed Irish attorney-general in the room of Mr. Saurin, the champion of unmitigated protestant ascendancy. The liberal tendencies of these statesmen were to some extent counteracted by the appointment of Mr. Goulburn, the determined opponent of the catholic claims, as chief secretary. Mr. Charles W. Wynn, in a letter to the earl of Liverpool, referring to these ministerial arrangements, and to his hope of contributing to the accomplishment of catholic emancipation, says:—"The circumstance which mainly encouraged me to act upon this hope is the intended appointment of lord Wellesley and Mr. Plunket. This appears to hold out to Ireland in general the fairest prospect of a firm, impartial, and conciliatory administration, while their known sentiments, with regard to the catholics in particular, will, I trust, excite in that great body of his majesty's subjects a confidence from which the most beneficial results may be expected. The nominations are, however, accompanied by that of another gentleman as chief secretary, whose opinions are known to be directly at variance with those of lord Wellesley and Mr. Plunket on this most momentous subject. I am so deeply impressed with the inconvenience and irritation which may arise from the apprehension in the public mind of counteraction and opposition between the lord-lieutenant and his secretary at a period of so much disturbance as the present, that if this should be made the subject of parliamentary discussion, I may find it necessary to declare that it is one in which I could not have concurred."* Lord Liverpool, however, defended the appointment, on the ground that a man's opinions on the catholic question should not disqualify him for office in Ireland, "it being understood that the existing laws, whatever they may be, are to be equally administered with respect to all classes of his majesty's subjects, and that the Roman catholics are in any case to enjoy their fair share of the privileges and advantages to which they are by law entitled."

This coalition was considered a matter of great importance, not as giving strength to the administration of lord Liverpool, to which it brought only a few votes in the house of commons, but as indicating a radical change of policy towards Ireland. Lord Eldon was by no means satisfied with the changes. "This coalition," he writes, "I think, will have consequences very different from those expected by the members of administration who have brought it about. I hate coalitions." No doubt they ill suited his uncompromising spirit; and any connection with the whigs must have been in the highest degree repugnant to the feelings of one who believed that the granting of catholic emancipation would involve the ruin of the constitution.

Very strong hopes were entertained by the liberal party from the administration of lord Wellesley, but it was his

* Memoirs of George IV., by Robert Hulse, vol. II., p. 339.

* Buckingham's "Memoirs," vol. I., p. 250.

misfortune to be obliged to commence it with coercive measures, always the ready resource of the Irish government. The new viceroy would have removed, if possible, the causes of public disturbance; but, in the meantime, the peace must be preserved and sanguinary outrages must be repressed, and he did not shrink from the discharge of his duty in this respect on account of the popular odium which it was sure to bring upon his government. Mr. Plunket, as attorney-general, was as firm in the administration of justice as Mr. Saurin, his high tory predecessor, could be. The measures of repression adopted by the legislature were certainly not wanting in severity. The disorders were agrarian, arising out of insecurity of land tenure, rack rents, and tithes levied by proctors upon tillage, and falling chiefly upon the Roman catholic population, who disowned the ministrations of the established church. The remedies which the government provided for disturbances thus originating were the suspension of the habeas corpus act and the renewal of the insurrection act. By the provisions of the latter, the lord-lieutenant was empowered, on the representation of justices in session that a district was disturbed, to proclaim it in a state of insurrection, interdict the inhabitants from leaving their homes between sunset and sunrise, and subject them to visits by night, to ascertain their presence in their own dwellings. If absent, they were considered idle and disorderly, and liable to transportation for seven years! These measures encountered considerable opposition, but they were rapidly passed through both houses, and received the royal assent a week after parliament met. Under these acts a number of Whiteboys and other offenders were tried and convicted, several hanged, and many transported. Lord Wellesley must have felt his position very disagreeable between the two excited parties. To be impartial and just was to incur the hostility of both. Possibly he became disgusted with the factions that surrounded him. Whether from this cause, or from an indolent temper, or from the feeling that he was hampered and restrained, and could not do for the country what he felt that its well-being required, or from ill health, it is certain that he became very inactive. A member of the cabinet writes about him thus:—"I find the orange party are loud in their abuse of lord Wellesley, for shutting himself up at the Phoenix Park, lying in bed all day, seeing nobody, and only communicating with secretary Gregory by letter. Indeed, I believe that the latter is more than he often favours secretaries Peel and Goulburn with." In another letter, the same minister, Mr. Wynn, complains of his total neglect of his correspondence with England. This, he said, was inexcusable, because those on whom the chief responsibility rested had a right to know his views upon the state of Ireland, in order to be able to meet the opposition, during the sitting of parliament. This was written towards the end of April, and at that time the government had not for a month heard a syllable from him on the agitated questions of tithes, magistracy, police, &c. The state of Ireland, indeed, became every day more perplexing and alarming. A revolutionary spirit was abroad, and all other social evils were aggravated by famine, which prevailed in extensive districts in the south and

west. The potato crop, always precarious, was then almost a total failure in many counties, and left the dense population, whose existence depended upon it, totally destitute. The cry of distress reached England, and was responded to in the most generous spirit. Half a million sterling was voted by parliament, and placed at the disposal of lord Wellesley, to be dispensed in charitable relief and expended on public works, for the employment of the poor. In addition to this, the English people contributed from their private resources the sum of three hundred thousand pounds for the relief of Irish distress. On the 30th of May there was a ball given for the same object, in the King's Theatre, London, which produced three thousand five hundred pounds.

The disabilities under which the Roman catholics laboured was a constant source of irritation in Ireland; the agitation upon the subject was becoming every day more formidable. Mr. Plunket was anxious to bring forward the question in the house of commons, but he was urged by his colleagues to postpone it, from an apprehension that the time was not yet come to give it a fair consideration: the cabinet was divided, the chancellor was obstinate, and the king vacillating, if not double-minded. "As to the conduct of the king," writes Mr. Freemantle, a member of the government, "it is inexplicable. He is praising lord Liverpool on all occasions, and sending invitations to nobody but the opposition. With regard to Ireland, I am quite satisfied the great man is holding the most conciliatory language to both parties—holding out success to the catholics, and a determination to resist them to the protestants."

Mr. Canning had been offered the governorship of India. Before his departure, he was resolved, if possible, to make a breach in the system of parliamentary exclusiveness. On the 29th of March he gave notice of a motion to bring in a bill for the admission of Roman catholic peers to seats in parliament, and brought it forward on the following day, supporting it by a speech of great power of argument and brilliant eloquence, illustrating his position very happily from the case of the duke of Norfolk, and his official connection with the ceremonial of the coronation. He asked, "Did it ever occur to the representatives of Europe, when contemplating this animating spectacle—did it occur to the ambassadors of catholic Austria, of catholic France, or of states more bigoted in matters of religion—that the moment this ceremony was over, the duke of Norfolk would become disseised of the exercise of his privileges amongst his fellow peers?—that his robes of ceremony were to be laid aside, and hung up, until the distant (be it a very distant!) day when the coronation of a successor to his present most gracious sovereign might again call him forth to assist at a similar solemnisation?—that, after being thus exhibited to the eyes of the peers and people of England, and to the representatives of the princes and nations of the world, the duke of Norfolk—highest in rank amongst the peers—the lord Clifford, and others like him, representing a long line of illustrious ancestry, as if called forth and furnished for the occasion, like the lustres and banners that flamed and glittered in the scene, were to be, like them, thrown by as useless and

trumpery formalities?—that they might bend the knee and kiss the hand, that they might bear the train or rear the canopy, might discharge the offices assigned by Roman pride to their barbarian ancestors—

‘Purpurea tollant aulea Britanni;

but that with the pageantry of the hour their importance faded away?—that as their distinction vanished, their humiliation returned?—and that he who headed the procession of peers to-day could not sit among them as their equal on the morrow?”

The debates were very animated, and excited the liveliest

His plan was to add one hundred members to the house—sixty for counties, and forty for large towns. He argued that this enlargement of the representation was rendered just and politic by increasing intelligence among the people, especially the middle classes, of whom large numbers were unrepresented in parliament. His motion was negatived, on the 29th of April, by two hundred and sixty-nine to one hundred and sixty-four, Mr. Canning having led the opposition of the conservatives, and defended the constitution as it stood.

The complaints of agricultural distress prevalent in



MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

interest. The bill was read the first time by a majority of five. On the 10th of May the house divided on the second reading, which was carried by a majority of twelve, the numbers being, for the bill, two hundred and thirty-five; noes, two hundred and twenty-three. The exertions made to defeat this bill were extraordinary. There were twenty-seven pairs of members who appeared in the house. The duke of York canvassed against it in all directions with the utmost zeal and activity. It was felt that if it passed into law, the admission of Roman catholics into the lower house must follow as a matter of course. The bill, however, was thrown out by the lords.

This session is memorable for the introduction of the subject of parliamentary reform by lord John Russell.

England, with the sudden reaction from war prices at the establishment of peace, had become so loud and general this year, that parliament undertook to find a remedy. An agricultural committee had been appointed to inquire into the subject, and had produced a report which was far from satisfactory. On the 29th of April the house of commons resolved itself into a committee to consider the report. Three different schemes were proposed for the relief of the farmers and landlords—the first by the marquis of Londonderry, the second by Mr. Ricardo, and the third by Mr. Huskisson. There was no scarcity of produce in England; on the contrary, it was very abundant, and the evil that oppressed the farmers was excessive cheapness, by which they were disabled from paying the

high rents and heavy taxation entailed by the war. Some of the remedies proposed were sufficiently radical in their character. The most natural was the reduction of taxation by means of retrenchment in the public expenditure. Some proposed that the tithes should be alienated from the church, and used for the purpose of reducing the national burdens. The largest party insisted upon the reduction of the interest of the national debt, which was defended as an equitable measure, on the ground of the increased value of the currency since the passing of Peel's bill for the resumption of cash payments. The plan of relief proposed by lord Londonderry consisted of the repeal of the annual malt tax, and the loan of a million by exchequer bills to the landed interest upon the security of warehoused corn.

Mr. Vansittart introduced some financial measures, which effected a material saving. He proposed a plan for reducing the interest of the navy five per cents to four per cent. Holders not signifying their dissent were to have one hundred and five pounds in a new four per cent. stock, and persons dissenting were to be paid off in numerical order. By this scheme, an annual saving to the public of one million one hundred and forty thousand pounds would be effected; besides a further saving of upwards of ninety thousand pounds of annual charge, which would be gained by similar reduction of the Irish five per cents. The high prices of the public funds obviated all difficulty in the execution of this financial operation, and the holders of the five per cent. stock found it expedient to acquiesce in the ministers' terms. The dissentients were in number only one thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight, and the stock held by them amounted to two millions six hundred and fifteen thousand nine hundred and seventy-eight pounds, not a fifteenth part of the five per cent. capital. Another operation related to what was called "The Dead Weight Annuity." The amount of military and naval pensions and civil supernumeraries was about five millions annually. On the 24th Mr. Vansittart brought forward his amended scheme for relieving the immediate pressure of this dead weight by extending it over a longer term of years than the natural lives of the annuitants. For this purpose an annuity of two millions eight hundred thousand pounds was appropriated out of the existing revenue for forty-five years, invested in trustees for the discharge of the then payments, which for that year were estimated at four millions nine hundred thousand pounds, subject to a yearly diminution by deaths. It was computed that, according to the ordinary duration of human life, the annuities for the lives of the then holders would be equal to the annuity of two millions eight hundred thousand pounds for forty-five years. The trustees were therefore empowered to sell from time to time such portions of this annuity as would provide the funds required for the payment of the dead weight, according to a computation made of the amount which would probably be due in each year. The bank of England became the contractor for a portion of the annuity. There was no novelty of principle in the project; it was only the old one of anticipating distant resources by throwing the burden of the existing genera-

tion on the next. It had the further disadvantage of incurring a useless expense for management; whereas the sinking fund, amounting at the time to about five millions, might have been applied to existing exigencies, and a real saving effected.

A question was opened in the house of commons, on a motion of Mr. Western, which often subsequently occupied its attention. It referred to the effect on prices of Mr. Peel's act of 1819, for the resumption of cash payments. According to the views of Mr. Western and Mr. Attwood, the value of money had been enormously increased by the resumption of payments in specie by the bank, and its necessary preliminary, a diminution of the circulation. Prices had in consequence fallen; rents, taxes, annuities, and all fixed payments become more onerous. They were opposed by Messrs. Huskisson, Peel, and Ricardo, and, on the motion of the former, a resolution was carried, by one hundred and ninety-four to thirty, "That this house will not alter the standard of gold or silver in fineness, weight, or denomination."

On the 25th of June Mr. Abercrombie moved for a committee of the house of commons, to inquire into the conduct of the law officers of the crown in Scotland, with respect to the public press. It was stated that the lord-advocate, Sir Walter Scott, and other ministerial partisans, had been instrumental in setting up certain scurrilous newspapers, that were made the vehicles of attacks on their political opponents. The exposure by Mr. Abercrombie drew from Messrs. Hope and Menzies, two of the parties implicated, letters of remonstrance, which were deemed by the house a breach of privilege, and they were summoned to the bar. They appeared there; but no ulterior proceedings followed, and the business was got rid of.

The legislation of the session comprised five acts on the navigation laws, the main purposes of which were to repeal obsolete commercial statutes, to relax the strictness of the laws enacted for the encouragement of British shipping, and to afford to our colonies a more direct intercourse with foreigners.

A church question, which had been brought before parliament during the previous year, was again debated in the house of lords towards the close of this session. Lord King had presented a petition from the Rev. Henry W. Neville, a rector in the diocese of Peterborough, who had presented as curate to a living the Rev. John Green, a clergyman every way unexceptionable, who had signed the thirty-nine articles, and given his assent to all the formularies of the church. The bishop of Peterborough, Dr. Herbert Marsh, refused to give him a licence unless he subscribed to a new creed, which he had framed himself, containing eighty-seven articles, in the form of questions, which were to be answered categorically by the candidate, in the fewest words possible, without liberty of explanation or qualification. This was manifestly a gross invasion of the liberty of the clergy. It was creating a new test, imposed with an assumption of infallibility by a single bishop, who undertook to determine for his clergy what was the exact interpretation of the church's articles, creeds, and formularies, and to bind their consciences to

his personal opinion, thus depriving them of the right of private judgment. The object was to exclude from the ministry of the church clergymen holding evangelical sentiments, and to restrain the reviving spirit of scriptural protestantism which had originated in the missionary movements of Whitfield and Wesley. Mr. Green having declined the test sought to be imposed, an unsuccessful appeal was made to the archbishop of Canterbury. Another petition was presented this year by the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, on behalf of a curate named Thurtell, who refused to give the bishop the "short, plain, and positive answers" which he required to his seventy-two questions, in order that he might know "whether the opinions of the persons examined accorded with those of the church," the bishop himself being the infallible judge. Of course, every other bishop might claim the same right of imposing a new and voluminous test, and there might be as many creeds in the church as bishops. The lords, however, were unable or unwilling to afford any remedy. The bishops were profoundly silent; not one of them could be provoked to utter a word on the subject, even by the taunts of the lay peers. The question was left to be decided by the tribunal of public opinion, before which the bishop of Peterborough had no chance of sustaining his attempt to impose fetters of his own forging on the consciences of the clergy.

Marriage is one of the fundamental principles of the social system; it is the basis of the family institution; it is the source of the sanctities of home, around which cluster all the sacred associations which support and shelter the moral principles and domestic habits, without which society could not be held together. The law of marriage, therefore, ought to be plain and simple, intelligible to all, and guarded in every possible way against fraud and abuse. The state has to do with it as a civil contract, securing civil rights, leaving the parties free to have it solemnised by whatever religious ceremonies are most binding upon their consciences. Yet the marriage laws of the United Kingdom are still in the most confused, unintelligible, and unsettled state, leading, in some cases, to ruinous and almost endless litigation; so that the legal tribunals of the country may take years to determine whether any particular marriage has been valid or not, as we see in the celebrated "Yelverton case" now before the superior courts of Ireland and Scotland, and yet to come before the house of lords. A new marriage act was passed in the session now under review, which, like many acts of the kind, originated in personal interests affecting the aristocracy. It was said* to have mainly originated in the marriage of the marquis of Donegal with Miss May, who was the daughter of a gentleman celebrated for assisting persons of fashion with loans of money. The brother of the marquis sought to set this marriage aside, and to render the children illegitimate, in order that he might himself, should the marquis die without lawful issue, be heir to his title and estates. In law the marriage was invalid; but it was now protected by a retrospective clause in the new act. By the marriage act of 1754, all marriages of minors certified without the assent of certain

specified persons are declared null. A bill was passed the commons, giving validity to marriages which, according to the existing law, were null, and providing that the marriages of minors, celebrated without due notice, should not be void, but merely voidable, and liable to be annulled only during the minority of the parties, and at the suit of parents or guardians.

On the 20th of June, when the bill was in committee of the house of lords, the chancellor urged his objection to the retrospective clause, as unsettling the rights of property. The report being brought up on the 25th, he repeated his objections, and moved that the retrospective clause should be omitted. The motion was negatived. On the 2nd of July, the day fixed for the third reading, his brother, lord Stowell, made a similar motion, which was also defeated. The chancellor moved the insertion of a clause for giving validity to deeds, assignments, and settlements, made by persons having claims on any property affected by the bill. The marquis of Lansdowne opposed this clause, which, he said, would give the bill the effect of declaring children legitimate, and yet disinheriting them—"of peopling the house of lords with titled beggars." This clause having been negatived on a division, the chancellor proposed another to the same effect, with the addition of the words, "for good and valuable consideration." This also was rejected by a considerable majority. This was too much for the temper of lord Eldon, so long accustomed to have his way in that house. Irritated at being repeatedly thwarted in his efforts, on declaring the numbers, he exclaimed, with vehemence, "My lords, ten days ago I believed this house possessed the good opinion of the public, as the mediator between them and the laws of the country; if this bill pass to-night, I hope in God that this house may still have that good opinion ten days hence. But to say the best of this measure, I consider it neither more nor less than a legal robbery, so help me God! I have but a short time to remain with you, but I trust it will be hereafter known that I used every means in my power to prevent its passing into law." Thenceforth the venerable chancellor became sulky with his colleagues, feeling himself dragged on by their too rapid progress. He was very reluctant to attend their cabinet meetings, and absented himself whenever he could make any excuse. In reply to a summons from Mr. Peel, the home secretary, to attend a meeting on the alien act, he answered, that he could not possibly attend, adding, "My absence, however, can be of little, and possibly of no consequence."

The session ended on the 6th of August; the parliament being prorogued by the king in person. A parliamentary paper, which had been laid before the house of commons, stated that there were eighty-nine of its members, not including those who had naval or military commissions, who held offices or pensions, either in possession or reversion, to the amount of one hundred and seventy thousand three hundred and forty-three pounds. The members holding naval or military commissions were seventy-nine; so that one hundred and eighty-six members of the house of commons were dependent upon the crown, and naturally its creatures.

* "Annual Register," lxiiv, p 236.

Lord Londonderry, wearied with the labours of the session, had retired to his country seat at North Cray Farm, near Bexley, in Kent, to recruit his strength, and prepare to take his part as the representative of England at the forthcoming congress of Verona, which was to be held in October. There, on the 12th of August, he committed suicide by cutting the carotid artery with a pen-knife. Lord Eldon, in a letter on the subject, says:—"I learn, upon the best authority, that for two or three days he was perfectly insane; and the medical men attribute that fact to the operation upon his head of the unceasing attention to business which the last harassing session (to him) called for." The disease would appear to have been coming on for some time before; he had got the idea that he was beset by secret enemies—that he was the object of conspiracies. He was full of apprehension of being waylaid in the Park, and he felt that his life was every hour in danger. His mind gave way under the pressure of these morbid fears, and he put an end to his existence in the fifty-third year of his age—an event which excited profound grief throughout the conservative party at home and abroad, but which was regarded in a very different light by the friends of freedom, both here and on the Continent. Perhaps no public character ever presented two aspects so completely the opposite of one another, according to the point of view from which it was regarded. According to the tory view, no English statesman had ever accomplished such a series of important services to his country. They believed that the legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland entitled him to rank with the ablest ministers of his time. But eminently beneficial as that measure was regarded, it was thrown into the shade by the subsequent calculations of lord Castlereagh—first as secretary at war, and then as foreign secretary—which effected the overthrow of the mighty military despot by whom his country had been so long menaced. In the eyes of his party, nothing could exceed the manliness of his bearing in the unequal conflict in which every session he found himself engaged, "unless it is to be looked for in the inexhaustible amicability that characterised his relations with the most implacable of his foes." "As a statesman, as a gentleman, as a man," says the duke of Buckingham, "the marquis of Londonderry was the Bayard of political chivalry—*sans peur et sans reproche*; and it reflects no slight disgrace on this monument-rearing age that, neither in the land of his nativity, nor in that of his adoption, has any memorial been raised worthy of his fame."* A still more ardent eulogist declares that his whole life was a continual struggle with the majority of his own or foreign lands. He combated to subdue or to bless them. He began his career by rescuing his native country from the incapable legislature by which its energies had been so long repressed. His mature strength was exerted in a long and desperate conflict with the despotism of revolutionary France, which his firmness, as well as the arm of Wellington, brought to a triumphant issue. His latter days were spent in a ceaseless conflict with the revolutionary spirit in his own country, and in anxious efforts to uphold the dignity of

Great Britain, which he had been preparing to assert at Verona as he had done in the congresses of Laybach and Troupau. His policy in domestic affairs was marked by the same far-seeing wisdom, the same intrepid resistance to clamour. He made the most strenuous efforts to uphold the sinking fund—"that noble monument of Mr. Pitt's patriotic foresight. Had those efforts been successful, the whole national debt would have been paid off in the year 1845, and the nation for ever have been freed from the payment of thirty million pounds a-year for its interest." The firm friend of freedom, he was, on that very account, the resolute opponent of democracy, the insidious enemy which, under the guise of a friend, has in every age blasted its progress. "Elegant and courteous in his manners, with a noble figure and finely-chiselled countenance, he was beloved in his family circle and by all his friends, not less than respected by the wide circle of sovereigns and statesmen with whom he had so worthily upheld the honour and dignity of England."† Such in substance is the estimate formed by Sir Archibald Alison, and which the party of which he is the champion would not consider exaggerated. Lord Eldon expressed the feeling of that party produced at the time by this melancholy event. "Our own country and Europe," he wrote, "have suffered a loss in my opinion irreparable. I had a great affection for him, and he deserved it from me, for to me he showed a uniform kindness, of which no other colleague's conduct forms an example."‡

Very different from this is the picture drawn by the Irish nationalists. Lord Londonderry, then viscount Castlereagh, was appointed chief secretary of Ireland in November, 1798, under his uncle, lord Camden, then lord-lieutenant; but neither he nor Mr. Pitt seemed aware of the amazing elements of power then latent in the young minister. "Who, indeed, could have believed," asks an Irish writer, "that under that bland, adolescent air, that lithe and dazzling front, and, stranger still, that tongue so awkward and *mal-adroit*, were hidden a heart as subtle, a will as truculent, a courage as cold, a conscience as unscrupulous as Cesar Borgia's?" For a model of Castlereagh's character we naturally refer, not to the generous ambition and the gallant rivalries of the British parliament, but to the crafty, impassible, and implacable ideal of Machiavelli's prince, or the inexorable volition, passionless wisdom, and atrocious cold blood of the third Napoleon. He was then not quite thirty years of age, and wore them with such a blooming, patrician beauty, that it was the custom of the opposition to speak of the secretary as a smooth-faced minion of Mr. Pitt. To the last days of his life Castlereagh's mixed metaphors were the sport of the wits of opposition; but sneer, stricture, and invective alike glanced aside from his imperturbable, polite placidity and his callous pluck. Few men have ever possessed such extraordinary executive faculties, such reticence, tact, and duplicity, such skill in deceiving, and such address in managing men, and so intense and even an energy in the conduct of great affairs. In a few months he earned a name the most hateful in Ireland since

* "Memoirs of the Court of George IV." vol. i., p. 357.

† Alison's "History of Europe," vol. ii., p. 526.

‡ Twiss's "Life of Eldon," vol. ii., p. 46.

Cromwell's. During the last months of the rebellion, acting as secretary *ad interim*, he had served a rapid noviciate in the corrupt system of the Castle, at one of its worst periods. Bloody Carhampton, domineering Clare, and Toler, a ferocious vampire, composed the real executive of the country at the time. At such a council board he learned to 'dabble his sleek young hands in Erin's gore,' and learned the lesson with all the rancorous zeal of a renegade; for, a very few years before, his lordship had been a very ultra-democratic northern whig. Already an audacious and unscrupulous ambition possessed him. It was said that he even ventured to emulate the fame and imitate the methods of Mr. Pitt; but perhaps the brilliant success which another young Irish noble, lord Mornington, had rapidly won in the wider field of imperial politics, obtained a more natural incentive for him. Fifteen years afterwards, he and the two brothers Wellesley concluded that awful contest in which Pitt himself had succumbed. Its secret history is that of an alliance between these three Irish adventurers. It was Castlereagh who appointed and maintained the duke of Wellington as British generalissimo; Wellesley who suggested, and Castlereagh who conducted the diplomatic arrangements which banded all Europe against Napoleon at the congress of Vienna.*

Nothing could exceed the vehemence with which Irish orators denounced the means by which Castlereagh carried the union. On the bribing of the Irish parliament to put an end to its own existence, for which one million five hundred thousand pounds was openly set apart to be levied of the Irish people, Plunket expressed himself with the utmost indignation. On the 10th of March, 1800, he stood up in the Irish house of commons and demanded of lord Castlereagh whether he meant to abandon "such an abomination, so irritating to their feelings, so insulting to the honour of the country, that no base miscreant, however powerful his influence, who had the meanness and criminality to listen to the corrupt and degrading proposal of purchasing from him the representative rights of his country for fifteen thousand, twenty thousand, or forty thousand pounds, should continue to exult in his infamous and corrupt triumph over every principle of national honour and justice." Castlereagh having coolly answered that he was only waiting till the articles of union were adopted by both houses to propose the exact quantum and mode of compensation, Plunket continued, "Here, then, is a poor country, that has travelled, according to the noble lord's account, so rapidly in the career of bankruptcy, that her finances are unequal to her war establishment or her civil establishment—a nation almost engulfed in the jaws of beggary and ruin—yet this poor country is now told by the minister he must find a million and a half of money to be raffled for by the members of this house; but that every man who takes the dice-box in his hand to throw for his share of the plunder must first pledge himself to vote for the union. What will the people of Ireland say to so base and flagitious a piece of plunder as this juggling

from them, by taxes on their wants and miseries, the enormous sum of a million and a half, to reward the betrayers of their rights and liberties?"*

This was the Irish view of lord Castlereagh's statesmanship; twenty years later the English liberals did not regard it in a much more favourable light. Under the foreign policy, which he directed, the British government confined itself to passive protests or vain declarations of abstract principles, while the Holy Alliance was strangling the new-born liberty of Italy and Spain. A contemporary writer observes, that the degeneracy in the foreign policy of England resulted from the political career and character of lord Londonderry:—"No government, even that of ancient Rome, ever held a more commanding position than England upon the fall of the French empire. Aggrieved individuals and oppressed nations appealed to her as the arbitress, like Rome, of public right and political dominion over the civilised world. She had proffered to her the high and heroic part in the drama of European politics, and lord Londonderry condemned her to play a subordinate and mean one. His ignorance of the social intellect of Europe, past and present, in arts, literature, and policy; his silly adoption of the aristocratic tone and despotic principles of ministers and monarchs with whom he associated abroad; his impertinent false shame of the plebeian liberty of England; his openness to the hollow flatteries of courtiers and their sovereigns; his total want of continental experience in public affairs—enabled men possessing an accurate topical knowledge of Europe, physical and moral, and trained in negotiation, artifice, and intrigue, to practice upon his incapacity and weakness, and led him beyond his depth. In 1815–16 he actually co-operated with the relentless despotism which trampled on the rights of ancient and free states and independent nations. In the interval, however, between the congresses of Vienna and Verona, he became sensible of the false position into which he had brought his government, his country, and himself. When the holy allies, grouped in congress at Troupan, and by adjournment at Laybach, issued an infamous proscription of human rights, liberty, and reason, declaring that every change in legislation and government should emanate from those alone (themselves) whom God had rendered responsible for power, lord Londonderry protested, but with equivocal epithets and neutralising qualifications; and the emperor of Austria, without a shadow of right except that of tyranny and brute force, destroyed the constitutional governments, and restored the imbecile tyranny of Naples and Piedmont, with the additional pressure of his own barbarous yoke upon the whole of ill-fated, illustrious Italy."†

His disappointment at the results of his policy; the disregard to English remonstrances on the part of the Holy Alliance, for which English arms and English money had prepared the way; the odium which attached to his name with the people of Europe, from their belief that he had betrayed the cause of freedom, and made himself the instrument of royal despots; the fact that secret societies abounded throughout the continent, and the disquieting

* Memoir of Lord Plunket, by J. C. Hoey, p. 10.

* Plunket's Speeches, p. 75.

† Life and Reign of George IV., vol. III., p. 251.



SIR WALTER SCOTT PRESENTING THE CROSS OF ST. ANDREW TO GEORGE IV.

apprehension that he was himself marked as one of their victims, preyed upon his mind, and rendered him morbidly sensitive to the attacks that were made upon him in parliament and the press; and the prospect of meeting another congress under such discouraging circumstances, and with altered views, was too much for the fortitude that had withstood so many assaults, and reason at last fell from her tottering throne. The liberal party had but a poor opinion of his ability. It was said that no minister had ever led the house of commons with such poverty of

ministers, where he had engaged to be present. The duke advised his friend to consult his medical attendant, and also wrote to Dr. Bankhead, suggesting that some excuse should be made for visiting lord Londonderry at his own house, and watching him closely. But, in spite of all the care which was taken to remove instruments of destruction out of the patient's way, he contrived to get hold of a pen-knife, with which, in a moment of delirium, he destroyed himself. "No words," says the Rev. G. R. Gleig, "can describe the effects produced by this catastrophe on Eng-



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intellect. His public speaking was miserable, abounding in words, confused with tautologies and parentheses, mixed metaphors, and unfinished periods. But his noble and genial qualities endeared him to his friends in private life, and caused his awful death to be felt with a pang of grief throughout a large circle of personal and political friends. The duke of Wellington, with whom he had been on terms of the closest intimacy, and who must be admitted to have been no bad judge of character, regarded him as the ablest, as he was beyond all comparison the bravest of his colleagues. The duke alone noticed the gradual development of disease in his mind. As the session wore on he became querulous in parliament, taciturn and gloomy at the meetings of the cabinet, and expressed great uneasiness about the meeting of crowned heads and

lish society in general, and among the members of the cabinet in particular. Though differing from some of them on various points, and especially in his desire to admit Roman catholics into parliament, lord Londonderry was held by them all in the highest esteem and respect. The great characteristic of his nature was truth. He might be right or wrong in the opinions which he entertained; but he entertained none, or, at all events, did not advocate any, of the soundness of which he was not himself convinced. Of the slightest approach to finesse or intrigue he was incapable. This quality it was, indeed, which, while it commanded for him the steady friendship of the duke of Wellington, rendered his intercourse with Mr. Canning always slippery, and for a time severed it. He was not popular as a minister—it was hardly possible

that he should be, for he had no sympathy with cant in any form, and was prone to express himself frankly in regard to it; but his views were those of a thorough English statesman of the school in which he had been bred. He had ever at heart the dignity of the crown, and the honour and welfare of the nation. . . . He was complete master of the house of commons; for even Mr. Brougham paid more deference to the manly statements of the foreign secretary than to the eloquent reasoning or brilliant sarcasm of any other speaker on the ministerial benches.*

Amidst these varying and conflicting testimonies regarding the character of this remarkable statesman, it is not easy to form a true estimate; but impartial history, we think, will come to the conclusion that, with intellectual abilities not much above mediocrity, he owed his success as a statesman, in a great measure, to his fixity of purpose, and to his audacity, courage, and perseverance in adhering to it and carrying it out, in the midst of the most formidable difficulties; while the strength of his will was aided by a commanding person, an imperturbable temper, extreme affability, and winning frankness of manner. Of the policy of the government in which he bore so long a leading part, it must be said that it was narrow, exclusive, jealous of popular rights, favourable to despotism abroad and at home, devoted to the interests of the throne and the aristocracy, at the expense of social order and national progress. Such, at all events, was the impression of the majority of the nation, and the detestation in which the London populace held his character as a statesman was painfully evinced by the shouts of exultation which followed his coffin into Westminster Abbey, where it was deposited between the remains of Fox and Pitt. This conduct greatly shocked lord Eldon. "This morning," he writes, "I have been much affected by attending lord Londonderry to his grave. The concourse of people between St. James's Square and the Abbey was very great; the great bulk of them behaving decorously, some behaving otherwise; but I protest I am almost sorry to have lived till I have seen in England a collection of persons so brutalised as, upon the taking the coffin at the Abbey door out of the hearse, to have received it with cheering for joy that L. was no more. Cobbett and the paper called the *Statesman* have, by the diabolical publications he and that paper have issued, thus demoralised these wretches."†

The honour conferred upon Ireland and Hanover by the royal visit had excited the jealousy of Scotland; and the most ardently loyal of the nobility and people of that country were extremely desirous that a similar honour should be conferred upon them. The king complied with their request, and started on the 10th of August. "There were great preparations," says lord Eldon, "to make his embarkation and voyage down the river one of the finest exhibitions ever seen upon the surface of old Father Thames." The river and its banks, from London to Greenwich, appeared in the highest state of animation, swarming with human life, and gay with brilliant decorations. A party of hussars, guarding a plain carriage, were his majesty's only equipage. He wore a blue surtout

and foraging cap, white trousers and Wellington boots. The shouts of the different groups of spectators attended his progress along the road to Greenwich, until the royal standard floating over the Hospital announced his arrival. Thousands of voices hailed him as the yacht departed with a favourable breeze; and as he passed Woolwich a royal salute was fired, and the regiment on duty at the Arsenal presented arms. At Tilbury Fort, Southend, and Sheerness he met with lively demonstrations of loyalty. At the latter place the lord mayor, and other authorities who had escorted the king down the river, parted from the royal squadron, and returned in their barge to town. The tide now checked the king's progress, and the ships lay to in the channel till morning. At Harwich, Scarborough, and other places, crowds of people put off in boats, as the squadron neared the shore. It was twice becalmed; and it was not till the 14th that the Royal George cast anchor off Leith. To the great disappointment of the waiting magistrates and inhabitants of the burgh, the king resolved to remain on board all night; but he appeared on deck in a naval uniform to acknowledge the salutes of the vessels in the roads that did him homage. On the 15th he had received intelligence of the death of his foreign secretary, and he immediately wrote a letter on the subject to lord Eldon. "I have this moment," he said, "heard from Liverpool of the melancholy death of his and my dear friend, poor Londonderry. On Friday was the last time I saw him. My own mind was filled with apprehensions respecting him; and they have, alas! been but too painfully verified. My great object, my good friend, in writing to you to-night, is to tell you that I have written to Liverpool; and I do implore of you not to *lend yourself* to any arrangement *whatever* until my return to town. This, indeed, is lord Liverpool's own proposal; and, as you may suppose, I have joined *most cordially* in the proposition. It will require the most *prudent foresight* on my part relative to the new arrangements that must now necessarily take place. You can easily judge the state of my mind."*

Like the corporation of Dublin, the town council of Edinburgh erected a barrier, in order that the king might not take possession of the capital of his ancient kingdom of Scotland without becoming resistance. From this barrier to the landing-place, all classes and orders of people crowded in holiday-dress, adorned with St. Andrew's cross, and each man bearing his token of welcome—a white willow wand. For a mile and a half vehicles of all kinds were closely packed at each side of the road. Windows, doors, and house-tops were occupied; while adventurous youths sat perched aloft on the branches of trees and on narrow walls. In the distance, steeples, towers, and turrets were availed of for the purpose of commanding even a bird's-eye view. Southey, the poet-laureate of the day, sang how Scotland had at length enjoyed the long-desired presence of royalty, whose pomp had once more filled her ancient and long desolate palace of Holyrood; how highland and lowland, romantic glen and fertile carse, the silent mountain lake and busy port, the populous cities

* "Life of Wellington," p. 381.

† "Life of Lord Eldon," by Twiss, vol. ii., p. 465.

* "Life of Lord Eldon," by Twiss, vol. ii., p. 464.

and pastoral hills, sent forth her loyal and rejoicing sons to welcome their king. The scenery about Edinburgh gave charming effect to the interest of this event: the old historic palace, embosomed in the valley; the castle, crowning the craggy precipice; the many-storied houses in the streets of the picturesque old town, with every possible diversity of building—college, cathedral, mansion, and cottage; the new town, with its uniform style of architecture—the houses, all built of cut stone, presenting the appearance of a series of palaces. The Calton Hill grandly crowned the whole; the acropolis of the modern Athens, circled with castellated buildings in the manner of a fortification, surmounted by a monument, an immense obelisk, rising from its summit. The whole aspect of the city and its vicinity was in truth as new to the inhabitants as it could have been to the king himself. Every height and precipice were occupied by detachments of the regular army, or more picturesque irregulars from beyond the Grampians; lines of tents, flags, and artillery, circling Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, and the Calton Hill, and the old black castle and its rock, wreathed in the smoke of repeated salvos; while a huge banner royal, such as had not waved there since 1745, floated over all. Every street, square, garden, or open space below was seen paved with solid masses of silent expectants, except only where glittering lines of helmets marked the avenue guarded for the approaching procession.

Sir Walter Scott was the master of the ceremonies on this memorable occasion. He was now in the height of his popularity as the "great unknown." His romances had revived or created the spirit of chivalry, and ministered to the intense nationality of the Scotch people in general, and the highland clans in particular. Mr. Lockhart thought that the highland element had far too great a predominance in the ceremonials. "With all respect and admiration," he says, "for the noble and generous qualities which our countrymen of the highland clans have so often exhibited, it was difficult to forget that they had always constituted a small, and almost always an unimportant, part of the Scottish population; and when one reflected how miserably their numbers had of late years been reduced, in consequence of the selfish and hard-hearted policy of their landlords, it almost seemed as if there was a cruel mockery in giving so much prominence to their pretensions. But there could be no question that they were picturesque, and their enthusiasm was too sincere not to be catching; so that by-and-by even the coolest-headed Sassenach felt his heart, like John of Argyle's, warm to the tartan; and high and low were in the humour not only to applaud, but each, according to his station, to take his share in what might really be described as a sort of grand *terrification* of the Holyrood chapters in 'Waverley;' George IV., anno ætatis sixty, being well content to act prince Charley, with the 'great unknown' himself for his baron Bradwardine."* In arranging the programme, Sir Walter had as many parts to play as ever tasked the Protean genius of his friend Matthews. The bewildered local magistrates threw them-

selves on him for advice and direction. He had to arrange everything, from the ordering of a procession to the cut of a button and the embroidering of a cross. Provosts, bailies, and deacon-conveners of trades were followed, in hurried succession, by swelling chieftains, wrangling about the relative positions their clans had occupied on the field of Bannockburn, which they considered as constituting the authentic precedent for determining their respective places in the procession, from the pier of Leith to the Canongate. Scott was obliged to hear with becoming gravity "the sputtering controversies of such fiery rivals, each regarding himself as a true potentate, the representative of princes as ancient as Bourbon; and no man could have coaxed them into decent co-operation except him, whom all the highlanders, from the haughtiest Mac Ivor to the slyest Calombeg, agreed in looking up to as the great restorer and blazoner of their traditionary glories."*▲

There was a peculiar interest in this meeting between English royalty and Scottish clanship. Before the time of George IV. no prince of the house of Hanover was known to have touched the soil of Scotland, except one whose name had ever been held there in universal detestation, the cruel conqueror of Culloden—"the butcher Cumberland." Now that the very last dream of jacobitism had expired with the cardinal of York, there could be little doubt that all the northern Tories, of whatever shade of sentiment, would concur to give their lawful sovereign a greeting of warm and devoted respect; but the feeling of the Scottish liberals, who then constituted the mass of the population, had been so greatly embittered towards George IV. personally, by the scandals connected with his treatment of the queen, that his visit to Scotland was a hazardous experiment. He probably felt this himself; but his reluctance to try it was overcome, chiefly, by the persuasions of Sir Walter Scott.

The weather was so unpropitious when the royal squadron cast anchor on the 14th, that it was found necessary to defer the landing until the 15th. In the midst of the rain and the breakers, however, Sir Walter rowed off to the Royal George; and, says the newspaper of the day, "when his arrival alongside the yacht was announced to the king, 'What!' exclaimed his majesty, 'Sir Walter Scott! the man in Scotland I most wished to see! Let him come up.' This distinguished baronet then ascended the ship, and was presented to the king on the quarter-deck, where, after an appropriate speech in the name of the ladies of Edinburgh, he presented his majesty with the St. Andrew's cross in silver, which his fair subjects had provided for him. The king, with evident marks of satisfaction, made a gracious reply to Sir Walter, received the gift in the most kind and condescending manner, and promised to wear it in public, in token of acknowledgment to the fair donors." To this record Mr. Lockhart adds, that, on receiving the poet on the quarter-deck, his majesty called for a bottle of Highland whisky, and having drunk his health in this national liquor, desired a glass to be filled for him. Sir Walter, after draining his

* "Life of Scott," p. 481.

own bumper, made a request that the king would condescend to bestow on him the glass out of which his majesty had just drunk his health. This being granted, the precious vessel was immediately wrapped up, and carefully deposited in what he conceived to be the safest part of his dress. Returning home in a state of high excitement, he found the poet Crabbe, who had come to him on a visit. In the joy of meeting him, he forgot the glass for a moment, and allowing the coat pocket which contained it to fall into its natural place, he sat down and crushed it to atoms. His scream and gesture made his wife conclude that he had sat upon a pair of scissors; but there was no damage done to his person which prevented his assuming the Highland garb, in which he appeared in the procession, heroically accoutred, and in a most bardish state of excitement, in a carriage drawn by four fiery horses. The programme of the procession was certainly highly romantic, completely pervaded by the "Waverley" and "Rob Roy" animus. First went three trumpeters of the Mid-Lothian yeomanry cavalry; next, a squadron of the same; and then, in succession, two Highland pipers; captain Campbell, and the tail of Breadalbane; Scots Greys; two Highland pipers; colonel Stewart and the Celtic club; Sir Ewan M'Gregor, mounted, and the tail of M'Gregor; herald mounted; marischal trumpets mounted; a marischal groom on foot; three marischal grooms abreast; six marischal esquires mounted, three abreast, with two grooms on each side; knight marischal mounted, with two henchmen; marischal rearguard of Highlanders; sheriff mounted; sheriff officers; deputy lieutenants, in green coats, mounted; two pipers; general Graham Stirling, and tail; barons of exchequer; lord clerk; registrar; lords of justiciary and session, in carriages; marquis of Lothian, lord-lieutenant, mounted; two heralds; Glengarry mounted, and grooms; young Glengarry, and two supporters, with tail; four herald trumpeters; white rod and equerries; lord Lyon depute mounted, and grooms; earl of Erle; lord high constable mounted; two heralds; Scots Greys; royal carriage and six, with the marquis of Graham, lord G. Beresford, lord C. Bentinck—lords of the household; Sir R. H. Vivian, equerry to the king; ten royal footmen; sixteen yeomen; the king, attended by the duke of Dorset, master of the horse, and the marquis of Winchester, groom of the stole; another squadron of Scots Greys; three clans of Highlanders, and banners; Mid-Lothian yeomanry; dragoon guards, &c.

The officers of the household and of the state, in splendid uniforms and appropriate insignia, awaited the king's landing. He wore the full-dress uniform of an admiral, with St. Andrew's cross and a large thistle in his gold-laced hat. The lord-lieutenant of Mid-Lothian and the lord-chamberlain received his majesty on shore, while the senior magistrate congratulated him on his arrival on Scottish ground. The cavalry, the highland infantry, and the gentlemen archers of the royal guards saluted him in due form. The usher of the white rod sent his herald to give three knocks at the city gate, the provost of Edinburgh going through the same mediæval forms as the lord mayor of Dublin. The knocking, after proper delay, was answered, the keys were delivered and returned, and the king was admitted into

his ancient capital with enthusiastic acclamations. The royal *cortège* was peculiarly interesting, from the variety of costumes adopted. The king declared that the beauty of the scenery, the splendour of the display, and the enthusiasm of his welcome, affected him more than anything in the whole course of his life. The people, in their turn, were delighted beyond measure with the condescension and affability of their sovereign. He took up his residence during his stay at Dalkeith Palace, as the guest of the duke of Buccleuch. The following day he held a levée in the palace of Holyrood, restored for the occasion to its former splendour, so far as upholstery could accomplish the renovation. The king, on this occasion, wore the highland costume, selecting for his dress the tartan of the Stuarts. On the next day three thousand persons paid their respects to his majesty, at a court held in the same place. He received his visitors in a field-marshal's uniform. He completely won the hearts of the Scottish ladies, dancing with the young, and gaily chatting with the old. A magnificent *fête* was given by the lord provost in the parliament house, Sir Walter Scott officiating as croupier. When the king's health had been drunk, his majesty stood up and said, "I am quite unable to express my sense of the gratitude which I owe to the people of this country. But I beg to assure them that I shall ever remember, as one of the proudest moments of my life, the day I came among them, and the gratifying reception they gave me. I return you, my lord provost, my lords and gentlemen, my warmest thanks for your attention this day, and I can assure you—with truth, with earnestness, and sincerity—that I shall never forget your dutiful attention to me, upon my visit to Scotland, and particularly the pleasure I have derived from dining in your hall this day." ("God save the king," and immense cheering followed.) He continued: "I take this opportunity, my lords and gentlemen, of proposing the health of the lord provost, Sir William Arbuthnot, *Bart.*, and the corporation of Edinburgh." When the king named the lord provost by the title he in so doing conferred, the magistrate knelt and kissed his hand, which was held out at the moment, and the incident was loudly applauded by the company. The king afterwards gave as a toast, "Health to the chieftains and clans, and God Almighty bless the 'land o' cakes!'" He added, "Drink this with three times three!" The delight of the company in drinking this toast may well be imagined.

The king attended the theatre one evening, and by his desire the drama of "Rob Roy" was performed. The theatre was of course crowded to excess, the boxes presenting a dazzling galaxy of rank and beauty. When the approach of the king was announced, there was a pause of death-like stillness; then an outburst of deep, honest enthusiasm never to be forgotten. "A prolonged and heartfelt shout, which for more than a minute rent the house," a waving of handkerchiefs, tartan scarfs, and plumed bonnets, testified the joy of the assembly, and delighted the ears and eyes of the "chief of chiefs." Sir Walter Scott, in a letter to his son, gives a vivid description of this royal visit. For a fortnight Edinburgh had been a scene of giddy tumult, and considering all that he had to do, he wondered that he

had not caught fever in the midst of it. All, however, went off most happily. The Edinburgh populace behaved themselves like so many princes, all in their Sunday clothes; nothing like a mob—no jostling or crowding. "They shouted with great emphasis, but without any running or roaring, each standing as still in his place as if the honour of Scotland had depended on the propriety of his behaviour. This made the scene quite new to all who had witnessed the Irish reception." The king's stay in Scotland was protracted till the 29th of August. On the day before his departure, Mr. Peel, who accompanied him as home secretary, wrote the following letter to Sir Walter Scott:—"My dear sir,—The king has commanded me to acquaint you that he cannot bid adieu to Scotland without conveying to you individually his warm personal acknowledgments for the deep interest you have taken in every ceremony and arrangement connected with his majesty's visit, and for your ample contributions to their complete success. His majesty well knows how many difficulties have been smoothed, and how much has been effected by your unremitting activity, by your knowledge of your countrymen, and by the just estimation in which they hold you. The king wishes to make you the channel of conveying to the highland chiefs and their followers, who have given to the varied scenes which we have witnessed so peculiar and romantic a character, his particular thanks for their attendance, and his warm approbation of their uniform deportment. He does justice to the ardent spirit of loyalty by which they are animated, and is convinced that he could offer no recompense for their services so gratifying to them as the assurance which I now convey of the esteem and approbation of their sovereign."

The king left Scotland on the 29th, taking a route different from that by which he entered. On his way to the place of embarkation he visited the earl of Hopetoun, at whose house he conferred the honour of knighthood on Mr. Raeburn, the celebrated portrait painter. At Queen's Ferry, the country people assembled to testify their loyalty with a last look and a parting cheer. The roar of cannon from all the surrounding hills, and the shouts of the multitude, greeted him on his embarkation at Port Edgar. The royal squadron arrived safely on the 1st of September at Greenwich, where he was cordially welcomed home.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Canning and the Holy Alliance—Lord Eldon's Apprehensions and Mortifications—Lord Bexley—Mr. Robinson Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Huskisson President of the Board of Trade—The Congress of Verona—The Duke of Wellington British Plenipotentiary—His Instructions—Conferences with the French King and his Ministers—French Intervention in Spain—Designs of the Allied Sovereigns regarding Greece—Turkey and Spain—William Allen—Festivities at Verona—Seductive Influences brought to bear on the Duke—Animosities of the Allies against England—The Duke disappointed and disgusted with the Conduct of the allied Despots—Mr. Canning's Foreign Policy—Public Feeling in England—The Duke of Wellington censured for his Conduct at the Congress—French Invasion of Spain—Recognition of the South American Provinces—Canning's Defence of his Policy.

LORD ELDON, who was by no means weary of political life, became very uneasy about his position, and the arrangements at which his majesty had mysteriously hinted. The chancellor religiously obeyed his injunction to abstain

from speaking on politics to anybody. But he was revolving in his mind not less anxiously who was to be the new leader of the house of commons, and how the constitution in church and state might be best protected against the spirit of innovation. Waiting impatiently for the arrival of his royal master, he wrote, "I cannot quit this place till he does come; and when he and Sir William Curtis are to cease exhibiting the full highland garb I cannot be sure." Sir William was a fat London alderman, whose appearance in the highland costume afforded much work for the caricaturists, and amusement for the public. On the king's return from his northern metropolis, the chancellor was about to press upon him the promotion to the vacant leadership of the house of commons of Mr. Peel, who had won high distinction in the late debate upon the catholic peers, when he found, to his unspeakable chagrin, that lord Liverpool himself had selected Mr. Canning, and overcome the royal objections to him on the ground of his having been formerly the champion of the queen. He had represented to the king that this was the only arrangement by which the whigs could be effectually excluded, and he gave him an assurance that catholic emancipation, though left an open question, should be resolutely opposed. Great as Mr. Canning's talents for parliament were, and great as was the want of talent on the ministerial side of the house, it was not without the utmost reluctance that the cabinet consented to receive him as an associate. They invited him to fill the place vacated by lord Londonderry, because he was forced upon them by circumstances, and they felt that the government could not go on without his aid. "Canning," said lord Dudley, "will be a bitter pill to them, and yet I am more inclined than I was at first to think that they will swallow it."* "Canning knew well enough," says the duke of Buckingham, "that he had only to wait, and the necessities of the government, notwithstanding the aversion of the majority, would force him into the position his great rival had left vacant." Many persons of influence shared in this conviction, and though far from cordial in their admiration of this political leader, they were eager to adopt him as their colleague or superior, seeing no other assistance at hand so capable of advancing their particular policy. His only competitor was Mr. Peel, who had not yet had sufficient opportunity of evincing his great powers for the conduct and discussion of public affairs to command the station which many of his colleagues would have gladly seen assigned to him. Canning was unpopular with the anti-catholic party in general, and particularly obnoxious to the lord chancellor; and, besides, there was the great objection of his having been the friend and adherent of the queen. But lord Liverpool, the premier, having been associated with him from early life, was so thoroughly convinced that he was the fittest man for the post, and so well acquainted with his transcendent powers of intellect, that he prevailed upon him to relinquish the governor-generalship of India, to which he had been appointed, and to accept the vacant secretaryship for foreign affairs, together with the leadership of the commons. "This change gave much satis-

* Lord Dudley's "Letters," p. 351.

faction to an important portion of the country, for there was now growing up a desire of improvement in various branches of the political and civil constitution and government; and to such improvement Mr. Canning was known to be cordially favourable, although he lived and died the foe of that pseudo liberality which thrives by pandering to popular passion.*

This was not the only bitter pill that poor lord Eldon was compelled to swallow. Without one word of intimation from the king or the prime minister, he learned for the first time from the *Courier* that Mr. Huskisson had been introduced into the cabinet. "Really," said he, "this is rather too much. Turning out one man, and introducing another, in the way all this was done, is telling the chancellor that he should not give them the trouble of disposing of him, but should, not treated as chancellor, cease to be a chancellor. What makes it worse is, that the great man of all (the king) has a hundred times most solemnly declared that no connections of certain persons should come in. There is no believing one word anybody says; and what makes the matter still worse is, that everybody acquiesces most quietly, and waits in all humility and patience till their own time comes." He states that he had written to lord Liverpool, and that he had no wish to remain chancellor, and adds, "To say the truth, I think those who should remain, and especially that officer, stand a very good chance of being disgraced." There was more truth, perhaps, in what follows:—"Bodily, I am well, and looking remarkably well: but I am puzzle-pated, and in that respect very awkward at times; upon the whole, however, greatly better, and full of plans as to locomotion."† He kept his place, however, determined not to meddle with those who were given to change. He had stated to his brother before this storm that, as chancellor, he would not meet another session of parliament. "We are bound to believe," says lord Campbell, "that if he had consulted his own inclination, he would instantly have resigned; but that he was persuaded, for the good of his country, to pocket the affront, and to consent to sit in the cabinet, with Canning on his right hand and Huskisson on his left."‡

Mr. Huskisson was made president of the board of trade, and in his stead Mr. Arbutnot became first commissioner of the land revenues. Mr. Vansittart, who had proved a very inefficient chancellor of the exchequer, was raised to the peerage by the title of lord Bexley, and got the quiet office of chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster. He was succeeded in the more important office by a much abler financier, Mr. Robinson.

It has been generally understood that it had been definitely arranged that lord Londonderry should represent England at the congress of Verona, and it was universally believed, as we have seen, that this fact weighed on his mind and led to his suicide; but Mr. Gleig states that in consequence of the reluctance expressed by lord Londonderry to undertake the mission, it had for some time been settled that England should be represented there by the duke of Wellington, and that he had begun to

make his preparations, when a severe illness fell upon him, from which he did not sufficiently recover to set out upon his journey till after lord Londonderry's death.* The duke of Wellington started for his mission when Mr. Canning had been only forty-eight hours in office. Stress has been laid upon the fact that he received his instructions from Mr. Canning, and this has been declared to be the turning point in our foreign policy, when England began to disengage herself from the holy alliance. She was not formally a party to that alliance, but the despots composing it had counted on her aid and influence in keeping down the nations which they oppressed. But Mr. Gleig states that lord Londonderry himself had compiled a letter of instruction for the representative of England at the congress, and that this was transferred, without a single alteration, to the duke of Wellington. It is, he says, "a very interesting document. It touches upon every point which could be expected to come under consideration at the congress, and it handles them all so as to guard with scrupulous care, not only the honour of Great Britain, but the rights of foreign peoples, as well as of their governments. It assumes that the subjects of general discussion would be three: first, the Turkish question, external and internal; secondly, the Spanish question, European and American; and, thirdly, the affairs of Italy. With this last question the representative of England was directed not to concern himself at all. As England had been no party to the military occupation of Naples and Sardinia—as she had merely acquiesced in it, with a view to prevent worse things—so she felt herself precluded from advising upon the arrangement now that it was complete, lest by so doing she should appear to admit the justice of a proceeding against which from the outset she had protested. The representative of Great Britain was therefore instructed to hold aloof from all meetings at which Italian affairs were to be discussed, and, if possible, to avoid connecting himself with the congress till these should have been settled."

With regard to the Turkish question, all possible measures were in the first instance to be tried, with a view to reconcile the differences between Russia and Turkey. These referred to the Russian protection of the Christian subjects of the sultan, and the navigation of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. When these matters were disposed of, then, and not till then, was the condition of Greece to be considered, and in dealing with this question the British plenipotentiary was instructed to use great caution, to avoid committing England either to the recognition or subjugation of that country. The case of Spain was the most perplexing of all. The English cabinet expressed the opinion that no foreign power had any right whatever to interfere with any form of government which she had established for herself, and that her king and people were to be left to settle their own differences as best they could. The representative of Great Britain was directed to urge this point with all his influence upon the allies, and especially upon France. But the case of her revolted colonies was different. It was evident,

* Twiss' "Life of Eldon," vol. ii., p. 446. † Ditto, p. 458.

‡ "Lives of the Chancellors," vol. vii., p. 398.

* "Life of Wellington," p. 362.

from the course of events, that their recognition as independent states was become a mere question of time. Over by far the greater portion of them Spain had lost all hold, and it had been found necessary, in order to admit their merchant vessels into English ports, to alter the navigation laws both of England and Spain. The letter of instructions accordingly directed the British plenipotentiary to advocate a removal of the difficulty on this principle: that every province which had actually established its independence should be recognised; that with provinces in which the war still went on, no relation should be established; there was to be no concert with France, or

colonial produce which was the result of slave labour. "It will be seen," says Mr. Gleig, "that the recognition of the actual independence of many of the Spanish colonies had already been determined upon by Great Britain, and that the establishment of diplomatic relations with them all had come to be considered as a mere question of time. This is a point worthy of notice, because of the misunderstanding in regard to it which originated in a speech subsequently delivered by Mr. Canning in the house of commons, and which still, to a considerable extent, prevails. It will be further noticed that the principle observed by lord Londonderry as the true principle was that of non-



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Russia, or any extraneous power in establishing relations with the new states. "The policy projected was exclusively English and Spanish, and between England and Spain alone its course was to be settled. Other nations might or might not come into the views which England entertained; but upon their approval or disapproval of her views England was not in any way to shape her conduct."

There were other matters which the English representative was to bring forward, and foremost among them all was the suppression of the slave trade, either by a general declaration from the allies that it should be treated as piracy, or by obtaining from them an engagement that they would not admit into their markets any article of

interference by Great Britain in the internal affairs of foreign nations. That the duke of Wellington entirely coincided with lord Londonderry in this respect, his conduct both now and in the future stages of his career clearly demonstrates. The leading object of his political life was to preserve the peace at home and abroad which it had been the great aim of his military life to conquer."*

The sovereigns of the Holy Alliance, however, acted on principles and with designs very different. Their general principle was not to tolerate any change in the European governments that did not emanate from themselves. The

* "Life of Wellington," pp. 365, 367.

Greek revolution they denounced as a rebellion against the legitimate authority of the sultan. The actual government of Spain they regarded as incompatible with the safety of monarchical power, and France called upon the sovereign to re-establish the despotism of Ferdinand. Russia, Austria, and Prussia took the same view of the Spanish revolution, but were unwilling to interfere by force of arms. France was not so scrupulous upon that point. Chateaubriand and other votaries of absolutism in church and state were busy fomenting conspiracies in Spain, and secretly supplying arms and ammunition to the priest-ridden enemies of constitutional government in that country. An army which during the previous year had been assembled on the frontier, under the ridiculous pretence of preventing the fever at Barcelona from spreading into France, changed its name from that of a sanitary cordon to an army of observation. M. de Villele, the new French prime minister, threw off the mask, and in a circular note stated that unless Spain altered her political constitution France would use force to convert her from her revolutionary theories.

Such was the state of things with which the duke of Wellington had to deal as British plenipotentiary, when he left London on his mission early in September, taking Paris on his way. There he had some interesting conferences with the king and his minister. The latter could hold out no hope that France would fulfil her engagements as to the slave trade. He spoke, indeed, of their African settlements as useless to the French people, and proposed to make them over to England in exchange for the isle of France; but further than this he declined to go, because there were too many interests, both public and private, engaged to thwart his efforts, should he be so unwise as to make any. His language with regard to South America was not less vague and unsatisfactory. He stated that France had not entered into relations with those provinces in any form, and did not intend to do so till they should have settled their differences with Spain one way or another. "M. de Villele did not add, as he might have done, that France was feeling her way towards the severance of Spain from her colonies, and towards the establishment in the new world of one or two monarchies, with younger branches of the house of Bourbon at their head." *

The third topic discussed at these conferences was the nature of the relations then subsisting between France and Spain, and the projects of the former power in reference to the latter. These were explained by the minister without any reserve, and with no symptoms of apprehension that they would be disagreeable to England, or of anxiety as to the result, whether they should or not. He frankly avowed that, under cover of the sanitary cordon, 100,000 French troops were assembled; that it was proposed to throw them in two columns into Spain; that one column, of 40,000 men, was to pass into Catalonia, while the other, of 60,000, was to march by the great road through Irun upon Madrid. He stated that the sole object of this invasion was

to insure the personal safety of the king, to afford him the opportunity to collect a native force strong enough to enable him to protect himself against the schemes of the revolutionists—that is, to put down the constitution. Of course, France said she entertained no views of conquest or aggrandisement, or even of prolonged occupation. She would withdraw her troops whenever the king of Spain said he could do without them, and yield up every inch of territory. In reference to this matter the duke of Wellington wrote home for instructions, and in reply Canning said:—"If there be a determined project to interfere by force or by menace in the present struggle in Spain, so convinced are his majesty's government of the uselessness and danger of any such interference—so objectionable does it appear to them in principle, as well as utterly impracticable in execution—that when the necessity arises—or, I would rather say, when the opportunity offers—I am to instruct your grace at once frankly and peremptorily to declare that to any such interference, come what may, his majesty will not be a party." To say that England peremptorily declined "to be a party" to the invasion of an independent state, in order to force upon the people a government contrary to their will, was not saying very much, nor putting the objection very strongly. There should have been the strongest possible protest against such an iniquitous outrage upon a foreign state. There is no merit in a man saying that he would not be a party to robbery or murder; it is an insult to expect that he should be a party to the perpetration of a crime. We are assured, however, that the duke steadily set his face against the project, pointing out that the step would be not only unjust, but impolitic; that it would precipitate the catastrophe which the French government feared; that the revolutionists would probably remove Ferdinand from Madrid as soon as they heard of the passing of the frontier by the French troops, and that, even if these troops should reach the capital, the Spaniards would not therefore submit, nor would the king be set at liberty. He argued that a war between France and Spain for such a purpose would be pronounced a war to put down free institutions, and that if France sought the support of her allies, the only one amongst them that had free institutions would feel it her duty to meet such a request with a refusal. Europe would be ranged into two hostile camps, that of absolutism on the one side and of revolution on the other; amid which not thrones only, but settled governments in every form, might be overthrown.*

In reply to these arguments, both the king and his minister stated that whatever France might do in the matter she would do single-handed, and that she would not only not apply for assistance from without, but that, if such assistance were offered, she would refuse it. The duke could not, however, prevail upon the French government to refrain from bringing the question between France and Spain before the congress. The king and his minister both contended that vast moral good would accrue from a joint remonstrance on the part of the allies against the treatment to which the king of Spain was subjected, and

* MS. correspondence, "Gleig's Life of Wellington," p. 368

* The duke of Wellington's MS. correspondence.

a joint threat that if any violence were offered to his person or family all would unite to avenge the outrage. "The duke," says his biographer, "was therefore forced to withdraw from the conferences, after he had explained that Great Britain would never assume without proof that violence was or could be intended by Spain to her royal family; that she would never be brought to declare beforehand what she might or might not do in any hypothetical case; and that if other governments took a different course, they would, in his opinion, do violence to the law of nations. Finally, he showed that if the purpose of the proposed agreement was to hinder Spain, through the influence of fear, from perpetrating a great crime, the whole transaction must necessarily be made public; and he took the liberty of adding, from his acquaintance with their national character, that Spaniards were as little likely to be deterred by threats from what they had resolved to do as any people under the sun."*

Having reported to Mr. Canning the result of his diplomatic efforts at Paris, the duke set out on his journey to Vienna, where he arrived on the 29th of September, and where he expected the congress to be held. But there again England's plenipotentiary, the great conqueror of Napoleon, who had restored the legitimate despots to their thrones, was treated with as little consideration as at Paris. Not till his arrival did he learn that the congress which he was invited to attend was not to be held at Vienna at all, but at Verona, where the petty Italian princes would have a decent excuse for attending, in order to carry on their intrigues. Meantime, in the interval between the adjournment from one city to another, the allied sovereigns were paying a visit of friendship to the king of Bavaria, whose system of government no doubt met with their unqualified approval. As the duke's instructions forbade him to meddle with Italian affairs, he tarried at Vienna till he should receive further instructions from his own government.

While awaiting an answer, he had opportunities of conferring personally with the czar, who had obtained an ascendancy in the councils of the Holy Alliance which rendered him the virtual master of every situation. With regard to the affairs of Turkey, the duke succeeded in obtaining from his imperial majesty an assurance that, unless driven to it by some unforeseen and irresistible necessity, he would not come to an open rupture with the sultan. He was not so successful in his exertions with regard to the Spanish question, on which the czar was in an irritable mood. He said that Spain was the very centre and focus of revolutionary principles, and he felt it to be the duty not less than the policy of the allied sovereigns to trample them out at their source, and for this purpose he had proposed to contribute 150,000 men, which he intended to march into Spain through French territory. In reply to the duke's earnest remonstrances against this course, the czar put a question which betrays the aggressive policy of military despots. He asked what he was to do with his army. It insisted upon being led against Turkey, and was only re-

strained because he had expressed his determination of employing it in putting down jacobinism in the west. The British cabinet did not think that the duke ought to abstain from attending the congress because of its meeting in an Italian city, and thinking so himself, he set out for Verona, after a fortnight's sojourn in Vienna. Arriving there on the 15th of October, he found it crowded with the *élite* of European society. Before he left Vienna, he was waited upon by the celebrated philanthropist, William Allen, a member of the society of Friends, who was known to every public man in his own country, and had corresponded with most of the princes and statesmen of Europe. The duke was, therefore, more amused than surprised when Mr. Allen said to him, "Friend, I must go to Verona." The following dialogue then ensued:—

DUKE: That is impossible; haven't you read the order that nobody is to be allowed to enter the town unless he belongs to one of the embassies?

ALLEN: Friend, I must go to Verona, and thou must enable me to do so.

DUKE: How can I do that? You don't hold any office, and I have none to give you.

ALLEN: Friend, I must go to Verona, and thou must carry me thither.

DUKE: Well, if I must, I must; but the only thing I can do for you, is to make you one of my couriers. If you like to ride as my courier, you may do so.

ALLEN: Friend, I told thee that I must go to Verona, and that thou must carry me thither; I will ride as thou desirest, and am ready to set out immediately.

And the Friend did ride as the duke's avant courier, and, reaching his destination before him, introduced himself to the emperors of Austria and Russia and the other crowned heads, and lectured them all round on the iniquity of the traffic in negroes. The worthy Friend was, however, strangely out of place in the gay and brilliant society which at that time crowded Verona. Never had that old city witnessed such scenes of splendour and dissipation. Balls and theatrical representations occupied every night, and were renewed every morning, to the great apparent delight of all who partook in them. "Into the round of gaiety which never slackened, no one threw himself with greater abandon than the duke of Wellington. Fond of society, and especially of the society of beautiful and gifted women, he met in the frankest manner all the advances that were made to him, and indulged to his heart's content in that interchange of pleasant sayings and doings in which few public men of the day knew better than himself how to take part; and it is worthy of remark that more than all the other diplomatists assembled there, he was courted and caressed, not merely because of the renown which attached to him personally, but because it was hoped to work, through his self-love, upon his temper, and thus to render the policy of England, concerning which much anxiety prevailed, more in union than it might otherwise be with that of the continental governments. But the politicians, female as well as male, who indulged in these speculations entirely mistook their man. To whatever weaknesses he might be liable—and he was not exempt from the shortcomings of human nature—the duke was so far master of

* Gleig, p. 370.

himself as never to give his confidence lightly to any one; and, from a course of action to which duty or a conviction of its fitness pointed, neither blandishments nor their opposites could, under any circumstances, turn him aside."*

In the midst of all this gaiety and pleasure, the despots did not lose sight of their great object to crush the liberties of Spain. Indeed, as appears from the foregoing passage, they availed themselves of the Ciresan cup of pleasure to accomplish their nefarious purposes. The "advances" of beautiful and gifted women were so many assaults on the integrity of the British plenipotentiary. Each Delilah in succession endeavoured to cut off the "invincible locks" of the hero of Waterloo, who, it is to be feared, gave them too many opportunities. But he did not betray his trust, and, on the whole, he acquitted himself as well as could be expected under the circumstances. Austria was induced to acknowledge an old debt to England, and to pay an instalment. The utmost which she could obtain from the allies on the slave trade was a reissue of the joint condemnation of the traffic which had been pronounced in 1815 at Vienna, and a special assurance from France that as soon as public feeling would admit, steps would be taken to carry out the treaty with England. In the discussion of the affairs of Italy the duke took no part; but the peace which he had urged upon Russia and Turkey was happily concluded, on terms honourable to both. With regard to the struggles for freedom in Spain and other countries, the duke found the allied sovereigns in the worst possible temper. They had no patience with England on account of her dissent, however mildly expressed, from their policy. "Hence, though England never expressed her approval of the military revolts in Spain and Italy, or even in South America, still, because she declined to be a party to the suppression of the free institutions in which they issued, Austria, Prussia, and Russia spoke of her as the champion of revolutionary principles all over the world."†

Accordingly, the duke found himself alone in his opposition to the plan of an armed intervention in Spain. It was at first proposed that all the allies should unite in this; but it was ultimately agreed that a *procès verbal* should be jointly adopted, in which the king of Spain and his family should be declared to be under the protection of Europe, and Spain threatened with a terrible vengeance if any injury were done to them. This *procès verbal* was addressed to the head of the Spanish government, with an explanation of the reasons for its adoption. The duke was disappointed and mortified at the obstinate self-will of the crowned despots. He had gone to Verona in the hope that they would at all events be open to arguments in favour of peace; he found them bent on such a course as would render its preservation impossible. When the ministers reduced their ideas to a definite shape, the incidents which they agreed to accept as leading necessarily to war appeared to him fallacious in the extreme. They were these:—First, an armed attack by Spain upon France. Second, any personal outrage offered to Ferdinand VII., or to any member of the Spanish royal family. Third, an act of the Spanish legis-

lature dethroning the king, or interfering in any way with the right of succession. Austria, Prussia, and Russia accepted the conditions readily, adhering, at the same time, to the substance of the notes which they had previously put in.

The duke produced a paper of his own, in which the three hypothetical causes of war were considered separately. He showed, "First, that an attack by Spain upon France was an occurrence beyond the range of human probability; next, that though, according to the usages of civilised nations, the persons of monarchs were held to be sacred, to extend a character of sanctity to those of other members of the royal family was a thing never before heard of in the history of the world; and lastly, that, till the allies should be informed on sufficient authority that a plan for dethroning Ferdinand or changing the succession in Spain was actually in progress, to assume that such crimes might be perpetrated was to insult the whole Spanish nation. For his own part, he must decline to have any share in the transaction, or to deliver an opinion upon purely hypothetical cases further than this—that if the independence of Spain were assailed without just cause, Great Britain would be no party to the proceeding."*

So prejudiced were the allied sovereigns against England, that they were ready to believe any tale to her disadvantage. One story which was circulated amongst them at the time was that England had bound herself to support Spain against France, in return for certain stipulated commercial advantages. Another was that she had entered into a secret treaty to defend Portugal against France, even though Portugal should join Spain in the war. After all the duke's arguments, explanations, and remonstrances, the French plenipotentiary was about to set off for Paris, representing all the powers as being perfectly unanimous on the policy adopted towards Spain, and the duke was obliged to threaten him with a public contradiction if he did not alter that statement and except England. The allies declined even to consider his paper on the revolted South American provinces, venting their ill-feeling in the following remark:—"That it was a subject of deep regret to them that England should stand forth as the protector of jacobins in all parts of the world, and that they (the allies) had neither the power nor the inclination to prevent it."

We are not surprised to learn that the duke withdrew from them greatly dissatisfied with the turn affairs had taken, and distrustful of the issue. In a parting interview with the emperor of Russia, the latter spoke at length in strong disapprobation of the refusal of England to co-operate in putting down revolution, and said, in conclusion, that Russia was prepared for every eventuality. "She was able, with the support of Austria and Prussia, to crush revolution both in France and Spain; and, if the necessity should arise, she was determined to do so." The duke heard his imperial majesty to an end, and then ventured to assure him that there was no sympathy, and could be none, between England and revolutionists and jacobins anywhere. The system of English government was

* Gleig, p. 374.

† Gleig, p. 376.

* Gleig, p. 381.

founded on respect for property; jacobinism, or revolution—in the sense which his imperial majesty applied to the term—on the confiscation of property. All for which England pleaded was the right of nations to set up whatever form of government they thought best, and to be left to manage their own affairs, so long as they allowed other nations to manage theirs. Neither he nor the government which he represented was blind to the many defects which disfigured the Spanish constitution; but they were satisfied that the best remedy for these would be provided by time, and to that greatest of all practical reformers he advised that Spain and her constitution should be left. The emperor could not gainsay the justice of these remarks, neither was he willing to be persuaded by them; so, after expressing himself well pleased with the settlement which had been effected of the Turkish question, he embraced the duke, and they parted.

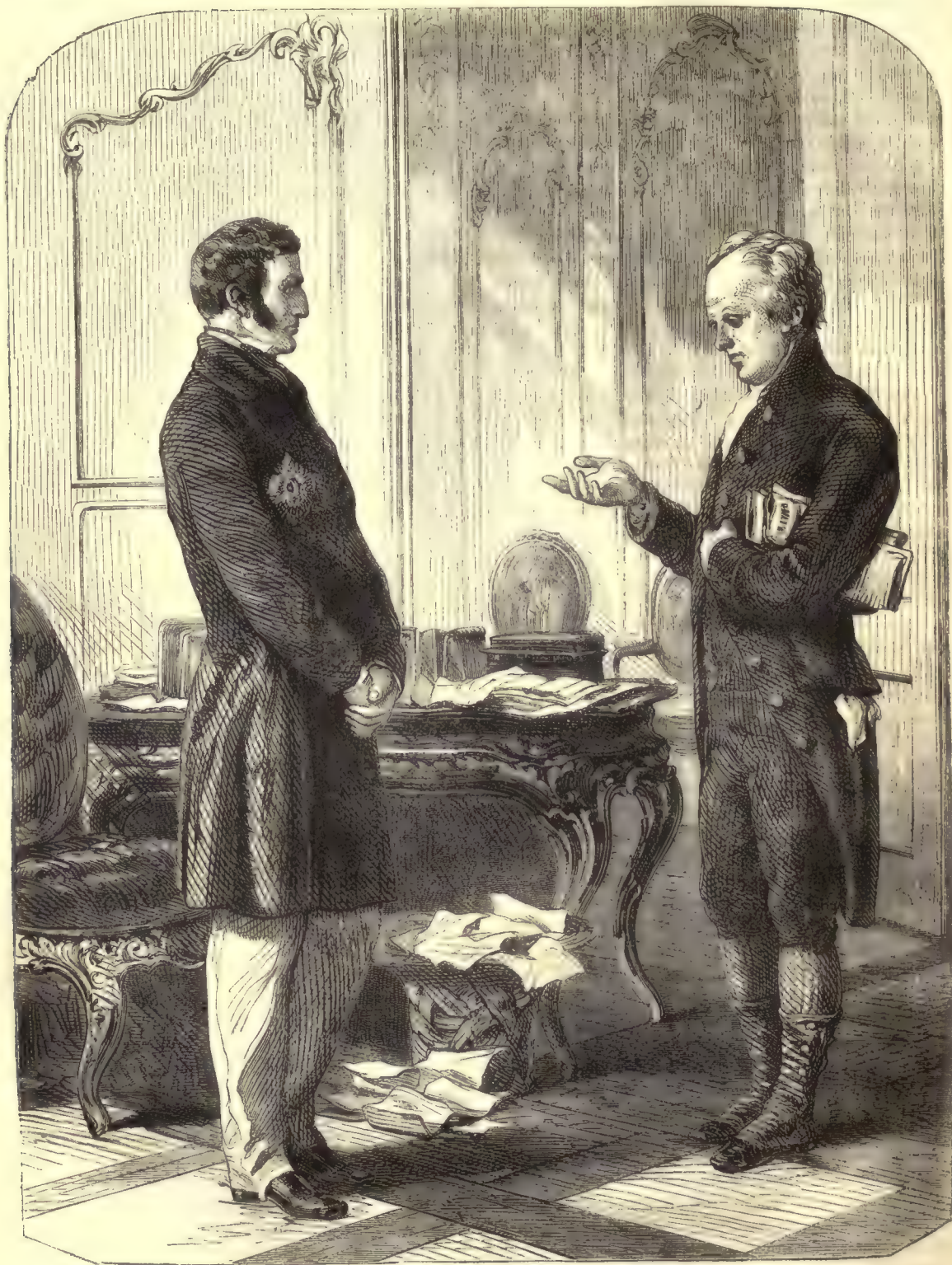
The duke arrived at Paris on the 9th of December, having spent more than two months at diplomacy with very unsatisfactory results. He found the king and his minister, de Villele, much cooled in their feelings towards the Spanish government, in consequence of the tone of moderation it had assumed after its defeat of the royalist insurgents. The king was now disposed to recall his army of observation, if he could do so with honour, and all he pressed for now was that Spain should so modify her system as to make the constitution emanate from the king, by vesting it upon a royal charter, and not upon the will of the people. If this were done, and done in time for him to explain the case to the parliament, when they met on the 28th of January, everything else, every matter of arrangement and detail, would be left to the undisturbed management of the Spanish cabinet and cortes. This was truly very accommodating. If Spain would only recant her constitutionalism, and adopt the absolutist creed of divine right, the allies would not send their armies into the country for the protection of the king against his people. The duke having reported the altered state of feeling in the French government, and all that had passed, to Mr. Canning, the foreign secretary instructed him to deliver an official note to M. de Villele, containing a direct offer from England to mediate. This offer was declined. On the 20th of December the duke quitted Paris, and arrived in London early in January. Subsequently the diplomatic war was carried on between M. Chateaubriand and Mr. Canning, both men of genius, and masters of a brilliant style of rhetoric, to which the duke of Wellington had no pretensions. Mr. Canning, alluding to the proposed armed intervention in Spain, with a view to stamp out the revolution, said, "The spirit of revolution—which, shut up within the Pyrenees, might exhaust itself with struggles, trying indeed to Spain, but harmless to her neighbours, when restricted—if called forth from within these precincts by the provocation of foreign attack, might find, perhaps, in other countries fresh aliment for its fury, and might renew throughout Europe the misery of the five-and-twenty years which preceded the peace of 1815."

On the 29th of January the king of France opened the chambers with a warlike speech. It spoke of

100,000 French soldiers prepared to march under a prince of the blood for the deliverance of Ferdinand VII. and his loyal people from the tyranny of a portion. A few weeks after the march commenced, and from the Bidassoa to Madrid it was a continued triumph. The king was set at liberty, and the gates of Cadiz were opened. The Spaniards were not true to themselves, the mass of the people being unable to appreciate liberal institutions. There was also a counter-revolution in Portugal, aided by foreign bayonets, restoring the despotic system. These events produced great dissatisfaction in England, and the duke was strongly censured for the timidity of his tone in the congress. Replying to attacks made in the upper house by lords Ellenborough, Holland, and Grey, he asked whether it would be becoming in one who appeared in the character of a mediator to employ threats, especially if he had no power to carry them into effect:—"Were they for a policy of peace or a policy of war? If for the former, could he go further than to declare that to any violent attack on the independence of Spain the king his master would be no party? If for the latter, all he had to say was that he entirely differed from them, and he believed that his views would be supported by all the intelligent portion of the community."

The conduct of the government in reference to the congress was the subject of an animated debate in the house of commons, which began on April 28th, and lasted three days. It was on a motion for a vote of censure for the feebleness of tone assumed by the government in the negotiations with the allies, an amendment having been proposed expressive of gratitude and approbation. In Mr. Canning's speech on the third day there was one remarkable passage, which clearly defined his foreign policy, and showed that it had a distinct purpose, and aimed at an object of the highest importance. He said:—"I contend, sir, that whatever might grow out of a separate conflict between Spain and France (though matter for grave consideration), was less to be dreaded than that all the great powers of the Continent should have been arrayed together against Spain; and that although the first object, in point of importance, indeed, was to keep the peace altogether, to prevent any war against Spain, the first in point of time was to prevent a general war; to change the question from one affecting the allies on the one side and Spain on the other, to a question between nation and nation. This, whatever the result might be, would reduce the quarrel to the size of ordinary events, and bring it within the scope of ordinary diplomacy. The immediate object of England, therefore, was to hinder the impress of a joint character from being affixed to the war, if war there must be, with Spain; to take care that the war should not grow out of an assumed jurisdiction of the congress; to keep within reasonable bounds that predominating *areopagitical* spirit which the memorandum of the British cabinet of May, 1820, describes as beyond the sphere of the original conception and understood principles of the alliance—an alliance never intended as a union for the government of the world, or for the superintendence of the internal affairs of other states; and this, I say, was accomplished."

The sense of the house was so completely with the



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government, that Mr. Brougham, who led the opposition, declined to go to a division. A division having been called for, however, on the part of ministers, the whole assembly poured into the lobby, till it could hold no more; and then the remaining members who were shut in were compelled to pass for an opposition, though there were ministerialists among them. They amounted to twenty, in a house of 372.*

The aggressive policy of the Holy Alliance, and the French invasion of Spain, despite England's remonstrances, provoked Mr. Canning to hasten the recognition of the revolted colonies in South America. It was in defending

cause we are unprepared for war; on the contrary, if eight months ago the government did not hesitate to proclaim that the country was prepared for war, if war should unfortunately be necessary, every month that has since passed has but made us so much the more capable of exertion. The resources created by peace are means of war: in cherishing those resources, we but accumulate those means. Our present repose is no more a proof of inability to act than a state of inertness and inactivity in which I have seen those mighty masses that float in the waters above your town, is a proof that they are devoid of strength, and incapable of being fitted for action. You well



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this policy that he uttered the memorable sentence so often quoted as a specimen of the sublime:—"Contemplating Spain such as our ancestors had known her, I resolved that if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the old."

In a speech which he delivered at Plymouth occurs the famous passage in which he speaks of the pacific attitude of England:—"Our ultimate object was," he said, "the peace of the world; but let it not be said that we cultivate peace either because we fear, or be-

know, gentlemen, how soon one of those stupendous masses now reposing on their shadows in perfect stillness—how soon, upon any call of patriotism or of necessity, it would assume the likeness of an animated thing instinct with life and motion; how soon it would ruffle, as it were, its swelling plumage; how quickly it would put forth all its beauty and its bravery, collect its scattered elements of strength, and awaken its dormant thunder. Such as is one of these magnificent machines when springing from inaction into a display of its might, such is England herself, while, apparently passive and motionless, she silently concentrates the power to be put forth on an adequate occasion."

* Miss Martineau's "Thirty Years' Peace," vol. i., p. 296.

CHAPTER IX.

NATIONAL PROSPERITY AND THE MONETARY SYSTEM.

Agricultural Distress—Proposed Remedies—Mr. Cobbett—Resumption of Cash Payments—A restricted Currency—Scarcity of the Precious Metals—Inconvertible Paper Money—The Small Note Act; its Effect on Prices—Brilliant Dawn of Commercial Prosperity—Mr. Huskisson's Statement—A Popular Budget—The Reduction of the National Debt—The Sinking Fund—Mysteries of the Public Funds—Reform of our Commercial Policy—Mr. Huskisson as a Free Trader—Policy of the Navigation Laws—The Reciprocity System—His Answer to the Arguments of the Protectionists—The Shipping Interest—The Retaliatory Principle—The Petition of the London Merchants—The Principles of Free Trade clearly stated and triumphantly vindicated—Growing Influence of the Commercial Classes on Legislation in General—Flourishing State of all the National Interests—Enterprise and Progress—Joint Stock Companies—Abundance of Capital—Reckless Speculation—Excessive Issue of Notes by Country Banks—Spirit of Adventure—Mining Speculations—Drain of Bullion to South America—The Commercial Crisis—General Panic, its ruinous Effects—Remedy, a Government Issue of Inconvertible Bank Notes—Evils of an inadequate Currency.

THE year 1823 opened auspiciously, and continued to exhibit unequivocal marks of progressive prosperity. Every branch of manufacturing industry was in a flourishing state. The cotton trade was unusually brisk. There was a considerable increase in the quantity of silks and woollens manufactured; and in consequence of augmenting exportation, the demand for hardware and outlery was quickened from the state of stagnation in which it had remained since the conclusion of the war. The shipping interest, which had been greatly depressed, fully shared in the general improvement. The agriculturists, however, were still embarrassed and discontented. In January no less than sixteen English counties had sent requisitions to their sheriffs to call meetings to consider the causes of their distresses. The principal remedies proposed were reduction of taxation; a reform of the house of commons; a depreciation of the currency; a commutation of tithes; and an appropriation of the redundant wealth of the church to the public exigencies. At the Norwich meeting a series of resolutions were proposed and seconded by the gentry of the county, but they were rejected and put aside on the motion of Mr. Cobbett, who read a petition which was adopted with acclamation. It recommended an appropriation of part of the church property to the payment of the public debt; a reduction of the standing army; an abolition of sinecures and undeserved pensions; the sale of the crown lands; an equitable adjustment of contracts; the suspension of all legal processes for one year for the recovery of rents and tithes; and the repeal of the taxes on malt, soap, leather, hops, and candles.

The distress which had pressed so severely on the country, and which set the people thinking about the most perilous political changes, was intimately connected with the state of the currency. Throughout the troubled period of almost incessant war and lavish expenditure between 1797 and 1815, the business of the nation was carried on with an inconvertible paper currency, the precious metals having nearly all departed from the country. Bank notes were issued in such quantities, to meet the exigencies of the government, that the prices of all commodities were nearly doubled. The bill which was passed in 1819 providing for the resumption of cash payments, had reduced the currency from £48,278,070, which was its amount in 1819, to £26,588,000, in

1822. The consequence was the reduction of prices in the meantime, at the rate of fifty per cent., in all the articles of production and commerce. With this tremendous fall of prices, the amount of liabilities remained unchanged; rents, taxes, and encumbrances were to be paid according to the letter of the contract, while the produce and commodities—the sale of which was relied upon to pay them—did not produce more than half the amount that they would have brought at the time of the contracts. The evil of this sudden change was aggravated by the South American revolution, in consequence of which the annual supply of the precious metals was reduced to a third of its former amount.

It was peculiarly unfortunate that this stoppage in the supply of gold and silver occurred at the very time that our legislature had adopted the principle that paper currency should be regarded as strictly representing gold, and should be at any moment convertible into sovereigns.

A paper currency should never be allowed to exceed the available property which it represents, but it is not necessary that its equivalent in gold should be lying idle in the coffers of the bank, ready to be paid out at any moment the public should be seized with a foolish panic. It is enough that the credit of the state should be pledged for the value of the notes, and that credit should not be strained beyond the resources at its command. The close of 1822 formed the turning-point in the industrial condition of the country. The extreme cheapness of provisions, after three years of comparative privation, enabled those engaged in manufacturing pursuits to purchase many commodities which they had hitherto not been able to afford. This caused a gradual revival of trade, which was greatly stimulated by the opening of new markets for our goods, especially in South America, to which our exports were nearly trebled in value between 1818 and 1823, when the independence of the South American republics had been established. The confidence of the commercial world was reassured by the conviction that South America would prove an unfailing *Donado* for the supply of the precious metals.

The bankers, therefore, became more accommodating; the spirit of enterprise again took possession of the national mind, and there was a general expansion of industry by means of a freer use of capital, which gave employment and contentment to the people. This effect was materially promoted by the Small Note Bill which was passed in July, 1822, extending for ten years longer the period during which small notes were to be issued; its termination having been fixed by Peel's bill for 1823. The average of bank notes in circulation in 1822 was £17,862,890. In November of the following year it had increased by nearly two millions. The effect of this extension of the small note circulation upon prices was remarkable. Wheat rose from 38s. to 52s., and in 1824 it mounted up to 64s. In the meantime the bullion in the bank of England increased so much, that whereas in 1819 it had been only £3,595,800, in January, 1824, it amounted to £14,200,000. The effect of all these causes combined was the commencement of a reign of national prosperity, which burst upon the country like a brilliant morning sun, chasing away the

chilling fogs of despondency, and dissipating the gloom of the popular mind.

In opening the session of 1823 the king, referring to this cheering state of things, said, "Deeply as his majesty regrets the continued depression of the agricultural interest, the satisfaction with which his majesty contemplates the increasing activity which pervades the manufacturing districts, and the flourishing condition of our commerce in most of its principal branches, is greatly enhanced by the confident persuasion that the progressive prosperity of so many of the interests of the country cannot fail to contribute to the improvement of that great interest which is the most important of them all." And in the royal speech delivered in opening the session of 1824, he referred to the same subject in a strain of congratulation, saying, "Trade and commerce are extending themselves both at home and abroad. An increasing activity pervades almost every branch of manufacture; the growth of revenue is such as not only to sustain public credit, and to prove the unimpaired productiveness of our resources, but to evince a diffusion of comfort among the great body of the people. Agriculture is recovering from the depression under which it laboured, and, by the steady operation of natural causes, is gradually re-assuming the station to which its importance entitles it among the great interests of the nation. At no former period has there prevailed throughout all classes in this island a more cheerful spirit of order, or a more just sense of the advantages which, under the blessings of Providence, they enjoy. In Ireland, which has for some time past been the object of his majesty's particular solicitude, there are many indications of amendment."

On the 12th of February, 1823, the president of the board of trade said, in his place in parliament:—"The general exports of the country in the four years from 1815 to 1819 had decreased £14,000,000 in official value; and he took the official value in preference to the declared, because it was from the quantity of goods produced that the best measure was derived of the employment afforded to the different classes of the community. In the year from the 5th of January, 1819, to the 5th of January, 1820, the exports of the country fell off no less than £11,000,000; and in looking at that part of it which more completely embraced British or Irish manufacture, he found that the difference in four years was £8,414,711; and that in the year from the 5th of January, 1820, to the 5th of January, 1821, there was a decrease of £8,929,629. Nobody, therefore, could be surprised that, at that period, the industry of the country appeared to be in a state of the utmost depression; that our manufacturers were most of them unemployed; that our agriculturists were many of them embarrassed; and that the country, to use the phrase of a friend of his in presenting a petition from the merchants of London, exhibited all the appearances of a dying nation. Though the condition of the agricultural interest was not as favourable as he could wish, still it was most satisfactory for him to state that not only did the exports of last year (1822) exceed those of all the years to which he had been alluding, but also those of the most flourishing year

which had occurred during the continuance of the war. In all the material articles there had been a considerable increase. The export of cotton had increased ten per cent., and hardware seventeen per cent.; of linens twelve per cent., and of woollens thirteen per cent.; and the aggregate exports of 1822 exceeded those of 1820 by twenty per cent., and of 1821 by seven per cent., notwithstanding a deduction was to be made from the exports of one great article, sugar, owing to a prohibitory decree of Russia, amounting to thirty-five per cent." The result of this prosperous state of things was that, in 1823, the new chancellor of the exchequer was enabled to present the best and most popular budget that had been laid before parliament for many years, remitting a large amount of taxes that had pressed most heavily on the springs of industry, and inflicted the greatest amount of inconvenience and privation upon the people. The revenue of the nation in that year was £57,000,000, and the expenditure was estimated at £49,852,786, leaving a surplus of upwards of £7,000,000. Of this surplus, £5,000,000 was set aside for the reduction of the national debt, and the remainder for the remission of taxes. As the assessed taxes were most oppressive, they were reduced fifty per cent., a reduction which was estimated on the window tax alone at £1,205,000. On the whole, the assessed taxes were reduced by £2,200,000. This included £100,000, the total amount of assessed taxes in Ireland. In England the whole of the window tax was removed from the ground floors of shops and warehouses. In the following year the chancellor of the exchequer had a still more agreeable account to render to the nation. The emperor of Austria had agreed to pay £2,500,000 out of an old debt of £6,000,000, an agreement which nobody expected. There was also a surplus this year, which enabled the chancellor of the exchequer to devote £5,000,000 to the reduction of the national debt, and £1,250,000 to the remission of the duties on rum, coals, wool, silk, and law proceedings.

Hitherto, everything connected with the public accounts and the national debt was involved in mystery. So great were the complications that it was difficult for even the best accountants to understand them, while they were almost unintelligible to the public. Mr. Robinson showed the strength and superiority of his mind by attempting to simplify the whole financial system, especially what related to the national debt, for the reduction of which he set apart the annual sum of £5,000,000. This was the "sinking fund," which, had it been preserved, would, in thirty years, with the growing interest upon interest, have paid off £300,000,000 of the public debt. But it was not preserved, and the national debt still remains almost in its integrity, absorbing nearly half the revenue to pay the interest on it. In 1824 government was able to spare £500,000 sterling for the building of churches in the manufacturing districts, £1,000,000 having been previously granted for the same purpose. The sum of £300,000 was voted for repairing and enlarging Windsor Castle, and £57,000 for the purchase of Mr. Angerstein's collection of pictures, which laid the foundation of the present National Gallery.

In 1823 we behold the starting point of the liberal

system of commercial policy, for which not only England, but the world, is so much indebted—the rivulet, which gradually expanded into a mighty river, bearing incalculable blessings upon its bosom to every nation under heaven. The appointment of Mr. Huskisson as a member of the government was an immense advantage to the nation. He was a man of great abilities, which he had perseveringly devoted to the study of political economy. He was a complete master of all subjects in which statistics were involved, and was universally looked up to as the highest authority on all financial and commercial questions. As president of the board of trade, he had ample opportunities of turning his knowledge to account, and to him is mainly due the initiation and direction of the course of commercial policy which a quarter of a century later issued in the complete triumph of free trade. Mr. Huskisson was not only intimately acquainted with the whole range of economic, financial, and mercantile subjects, in their details as well as in their principles, he was also a powerful debater, a sound reasoner, and was animated in all he did by a spirit of generous philanthropy.

A law in force since the time of Cromwell had provided that no merchandise from Asia, Africa, or America should be imported into Great Britain in any foreign ships; and not only the commander, but three-fourths of the crew, were required to be English. In addition to this restriction of our foreign commerce to English-built and English-manned ships, discriminating duties were imposed upon foreign ships from Europe, which had to pay more heavily than if the goods were imported under the English flag. The object of this system, which prevailed for one hundred and fifty years, was to maintain the ascendancy of England as a maritime power. Adam Smith remarks, that the Navigation Act may have proceeded from national rivalry and animosity towards Holland; but he held that its provisions were as beneficial as if they had been dictated by the most consummate wisdom. He admits, however, that they were not favourable to foreign commerce, or to the growth of that opulence that can arise from it, remarking, "As defence is of more value than opulence, the Act of Navigation is perhaps the wisest of all the commercial regulations of England." But had Adam Smith lived in our time, he would have seen that the utmost freedom of commerce with foreign nations, and the most boundless opulence arising from it, are quite compatible with a perfect system of national defence; and whatever were the advantages of the restriction system, other nations could act upon it as well as England. America did so, and thus commenced a war of tariffs equally injurious to herself and the mother country, causing the people of each to pay much more for most of the commodities they needed than they would have done if the markets of the world were open to them. The consequence was, that both parties saw the folly of sending their ships across the Atlantic in ballast, and a commercial treaty was concluded in 1815, which put the shipping of both America and England upon an equal footing, and relieved them from the necessity of paying double freight. The reciprocity system was also partially adopted in our commerce with other countries. In 1822 Mr. Wallace had brought in four bills, which made other important

alterations. The 3 George IV., cap. 41, repealed certain statutes relating to foreign commerce which were passed before the Navigation Act. Another act (cap. 42) repealed that part of the Navigation Act itself which required that goods of the growth or manufacture of Asia, Africa, and America should only be imported in British ships; and that no goods of foreign growth or manufacture should be brought from Europe, except from the place of their production, and in the ships of the country producing them. The next enactment prescribed certain specified goods to be brought to Great Britain from any port in Europe, in ships belonging to the ports of shipment. Two other acts further extended freedom of commerce, and removed the vexatious restrictions that had hampered our colonial and coasting trade. In 1823 Prussia retaliated, as the United States had done, which led Mr. Huskisson to propose what are called the Reciprocity Acts, 4 George IV., cap. 77, and 5 George IV., cap. 1, which empowered the king, by order in council, to authorise the importation and exportation of goods in foreign ships from the United Kingdom, or from any other of his majesty's dominions, on the same terms as in British ships, provided it should first be proved to his majesty and the privy council that the foreign country in whose favour the order was made had placed British ships in its ports on the same footing as its own ships. Since that time reciprocal treaties of navigation have been made with Prussia, Denmark, Hanover, Greece, Holland, France, Sweden, Austria, Russia, Portugal, and several other countries.

These enactments proved an immense advantage to the people of the nations affected by them, and gave satisfaction to all parties but the ship-owners, who cried out loudly that their interest was ruined. But their complaints were altogether unfounded, as will appear from the following figures. Under the restrictive system, from 1804 to 1823, the tonnage of British shipping had increased only ten per cent. Under the Reciprocity Acts and the free trade system, from 1823 to 1845, the increase rose to forty-five per cent. This result fully bore out the calculations and anticipations of Mr. Huskisson, in his answer to the arguments of the protectionists. They contended that the end of the free trade system would be to drive the trade of Great Britain into the hands of foreign countries; that other nations would not reciprocate in the same liberal spirit; that five-sixths of the carrying trade between Great Britain and America was carried on in American ships; and that it was quite impossible, without a repeal of the duties on Baltic timber, that British ship-builders could compete with foreign nations, who had wood at their own doors, and could navigate their ships for half the wages that the British ship-owners were obliged to pay to their sailors. Referring to the retaliatory measures of other countries, Mr. Huskisson said:—"In such a state of things it is quite obvious that we must adopt one of two courses. Either we must commence a commercial conflict through the medium of protective duties and prohibitions (a measure of impolicy which it is believed no man will now propose), or we must admit other powers to a perfect equality and reciprocity of shipping duties. The latter appears to be the course which we are bound to adopt. Its effect, I am persuaded, will be

to lead to a great increase of the commercial advantages of the country; while, at the same time, it will have a tendency to promote and establish a better political feeling and confidence among the maritime powers, and abate the sources of commercial jealousy. It is high time, in the improved state of civilisation of the world, to establish more liberal principles, and show that commerce was not the end, but the means of diffusing comfort and enjoyment among the nations embarked in its pursuit. Those who have the largest trade must necessarily derive the greatest advantage from the establishment of better international regulations. When England abandons her old principle, the united Netherlands, and the other powers who are now prepared to retaliate, will gladly concur in the new arrangement. I am prepared to hear from the other side that the proposed alteration will be prejudicial to the British shipping interest. In this observation I cannot concur. I think, on the contrary, that the shipping interest of this country has nothing to apprehend from that of other nations. When the alteration in the navigation laws was first projected, similar unfavourable prognostications were made by part of the shipping interest; but these anticipations have proved to be entirely unfounded. The shipping of Great Britain is perfectly able to compete with that of other countries. It is quite time to get rid of the retaliatory principle, which, if carried to the extreme of which it is susceptible, must injure every species of trade. One sort of shipping would be carrying the trade of our country, and then returning without any equivalent advantage, to make way for the countervailing regulations of another power, or else to return in ballast. What would be thought of our establishment if a wagon should convey goods to Birmingham and afterwards return empty? The consumer would, it was probable, be little satisfied with such a way of conveying his merchandise. The consequence would be that there would necessarily be two sets of wagons to do that work which was now performed by one, and that, too, at a considerable increase of price on the raw material. We are not now able to carry on a system of restriction, labouring, as we have for some time been, under many and unavoidable restrictions. Our trade and commerce, it is true, are rapidly improving, but they still require that we should adopt every measure by which either could be fostered or improved. What I propose is, that the duties and drawbacks should be imposed and allowed upon all goods equally, whether imported or exported in British or foreign vessels, giving the king in council a power to declare that such regulations should extend to all countries inclined to act upon a system of reciprocity, but reserving to the same authority the power of continuing the present restrictions with respect to those powers who should decline to do so."

The great principle of free trade had been first distinctly enunciated, not by any minister of the crown, but by the London merchants, in a petition adopted by them in 1820, embodying the maxim of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, which regulates every merchant in his individual dealings, and which, they contend, is strictly applicable as the best rule for the trade of the whole nation, as it would render the commerce of the whole world an interchange of mutual advantages, and in-

crease the amount of wealth and enjoyment among the inhabitants of each state. They remark that, unfortunately, a policy the reverse of this had been adopted, and more or less acted upon by the government of this and every other country, each trying to exclude the productions of other countries, with a specious and well-meant design of encouraging its own productions, thus inflicting on the bulk of its own people, who are the consumers, the necessity of submitting to privations in the quantity or quality of commodities, and thereby rendering what ought to be source of mutual benefit and of harmony among states a constantly recurring occasion of jealousy and hostility. They argue, that whereas the prevailing prejudices in favour of the protective or restrictive system arise from the supposition that the importation of foreign commodities occasions a diminution or discouragement of our own productions to the same extent, it may be clearly shown that though the production of one particular commodity might be discouraged because we could get it cheaper and better elsewhere, yet the production of other commodities would be encouraged to a far greater extent, so that the general industry of the country would be fostered and promoted by the more extensive and more beneficial employment of capital and labour. They pointed out, amongst the numerous evils of the protective system, the fact that the artificial protection of one branch of industry becomes the ground of a claim put forth by all other branches for similar protection; so that if the principle were fully carried out, it would tend to the exclusion of all foreign commerce, and cut off the nation from the enjoyment of the benefits which other nations, more favourably circumstanced for the production of certain commodities, are ready to supply us with on moderate terms. With enlightened views far in advance of the statesmen of Europe at the time, and in advance of a great many of its governments at the present time, the London merchants thus answer the leading objection against the principles of free trade:—"Although, as a matter of mere diplomacy, it may sometimes answer to hold out the removal of particular prohibitions or high duties, as depending upon corresponding concessions by other states in our favour, it does not follow that we should maintain our restrictions in cases where the desired concessions on their part cannot be obtained; our restrictions would not be the less prejudicial to our own capital and industry because other governments persisted in preserving impolitic regulations. Independent of the direct benefit to be derived by this country on every occasion of such concessions or recognitions, a great incidental object would be gained, by the recognition of the sound principle or standard to which all subsequent arrangements might be referred, and by the salutary influence which the promulgation of such just views by the legislature and by the nation at large could not fail to have on the legislation of foreign states. As long as the necessity for the present amount of revenue subsists, it cannot be expected that so important a branch of it as the customs should be given up, or materially diminished, unless some substitute for it less objectionable be suggested. But it is against every restrictive regulation of trade not essential to the revenue, against all duties merely protective, against foreign competition, and

against the excess of such duties as are partly for the purposes of revenue, partly for that of protection, that the prayer of the present petition is respectfully submitted to the wisdom of parliament.*

This petition, which was drawn up by Mr. Tooke, contains a statement of the case against protection, which, for force and perspicuity, has never been surpassed by any subsequent writer. The effects of the commercial policy which the London merchants may be said to have originated were not confined to commercial matters. They embraced the whole system of government, and indicated the dawn of a brighter era in our national policy, when the system of toryism—which may be described as an organisation of class selfishness and national jealousy—was about to give way to the reign of liberality and Christian philanthropy in the legislation of the country. The ablest champion of protection, Sir Archibald Alison, frankly admits, while deploring, the importance of the change, which amounted to an entire revolution. "It indicates," he says, "the advent of a period when the commercial body were not content to take the regulations affecting their interests from the hands of the legislature, but thought for themselves, and approached parliament rather as teachers than suppliants. Its subsequent adoption as a part of the settled policy of the country proved that the time was approaching when the commercial interests were to gain the ascendancy over the producing, and when every other interest was to be sacrificed to those of cheapness in production and economy in consumption. Whatever may be thought of these principles, upon which the opinions of men will probably be divided to the end of the world, according as they belong to the buying and selling or producing class, one thing is clear—that they came from the country, not the government; and that they are not so much to be ascribed to the influence of any individuals, however powerful, as to the immense growth of the commercial class in society, which enabled it to command the press, influence the majority of parliament, and obtain the general direction of public opinion."†

Of course, the commercial changes introduced by Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Robinson excited loud murmurs of dissatisfaction from the interests affected, especially the shipping interest. But the best answer to all objectors was the continuous flourishing state of the country. At the opening of the session in 1825, lord Dudley and Ward, in moving the address in answer to the king's speech in the upper house, observed:—"Our present prosperity is a prosperity extending to all orders, all professions, and all districts, enhanced and invigorated by the flourishing state of all those arts which minister to human comfort; and those inventions by which man obtains a mastery over nature by the application of her own powers, and which, if one had ventured to foretell a few years ago, it would have appeared almost incredible. There never was a time when the spirit of useful improvement, not only in the arts but in all the details of domestic administration, whether carried on by the public or by individuals, was so high. That world, too, which had first been opened to us by the genius of a great man, but after-

wards closed for centuries by the absurd and barbarous policy of Spain, has, as it were, been re-discovered in our days. The last remnant of the veil which concealed it from the observation and intercourse of mankind has just been torn away, and we see it abounding not only in those metals which first allured the avarice of needy adventurers, but in those more precious productions which sustain life and animate industry, cheering the mind of the philosopher and statesman with boundless possibilities of reciprocal advantages in civilisation and commerce. The people of England felt and acknowledged their happiness; the public contentment was upon a level with the public prosperity. We have learned, too, from what source these blessings flow. All the complaints of the decay of our manufactures from the change of system have proved fallacious. We no longer dread the rivalry of the foreigner in our markets; we can undersell him in his own. The silk manufacture, since it was freed from shackles, has increased almost as fast as the cotton, which has been always free from them. We have now been fully taught that the great commercial prosperity of England has arisen, not from our commercial restrictions, but in spite of them." The "Annual Register," which records this speech, goes more into detail on the same subject:—"Agricultural distress had disappeared; the persons engaged in the cotton and woollen manufactures were in full employment; the various branches of the iron trade were in a state of activity; on all sides new buildings were in a state of erection, and money was so abundant that men of enterprise, though without capital, found no difficulty in commanding funds for any plausible undertaking. This substantial prosperity was stimulated by the operations of the many joint-stock banks and companies which had recently sprung into existence." The "Quarterly Review" of that year gives a vivid picture of the prosperous state of the nation. "The increased wealth of the middle classes," says the great tory organ, "is so obvious that we can neither walk the fields, visit the shops, nor examine the workshops and store-houses without being deeply impressed with the changes which a few years have produced. We see the fields better cultivated, the barns and stack-yards more fully stored, the horses, cows, and sheep more abundant and in better condition, and all the implements of husbandry improved in their order, their construction, and their value. In the cities, towns, and villages we find shops more numerous, and better in their appearance, and the several goods more separated from each other—a division that is the infallible token of increased sales. The increase of goods thus universally diffused is an indication and exhibition of flourishing circumstances. The accounts of the bankers in the metropolis and provincial towns, small as well as large, with the balances of money resting in them, ready to embrace favourable changes in the price of any commodity, or to be placed at interest as beneficial securities present themselves, have increased to an enormous amount. The projects for constructing tunnels, railroads, canals, or bridges, and the eagerness with which they are embraced, are proofs of that accumulation from savings which the intermediate ranks of society have by patience and perseverance been enabled to form. The natural effect of this advancement in possessions has been

* Porter's "Progress of the Nation," p. 382.

† "History of Europe," from 1815 to 1832, vol. iii., p. 706.

an advance in the enjoyments which those possessions can minister; and we need not be surprised at the general diffusion of those gratifications which were formerly called luxuries, but which, from their familiarity, are now called by the softened name of English comforts."*

This happy state of things was the result of a legitimate expansion of trade. Manufacturers and merchants were at first guided by a spirit of sober calculation. The steady advance in the public securities, and in the value of property of all sorts, showed that the national wealth rested upon a solid basis. The extension of the currency kept pace with the

Mexico, and Buenos Ayres, formally announced in the king's speech on the 3rd of February; which stated that treaties of commerce had been made with those new states. The rich districts of South America being thus thrown open, there was a rush of capitalists and adventurers to work its inexhaustible mines. A number of companies were formed for the purpose, and the gains of some of them in a few months amounted to fifteen hundred per cent. The result was a mania of speculation, which seized upon all classes, pervaded all ranks, and threw the most sober and quiet members of society into a state of tumultuous excitement.



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development of trade and commerce, and the circulation of bankers' paper was enormously increased. But out of the national prosperity there arose a spirit of rash speculation and adventure, resulting in a monetary crisis. The issue of notes by country banks was under no restriction; no measures were taken to secure that their paper represented property, and could be redeemed if necessary. There were hundreds of bankers in the provinces who could issue any quantity of notes they pleased, and these passed as cash from hand to hand. The spirit of speculation and enterprise was stimulated to a feverish state of excitement by the recognition of the states of Columbia,

Joint-stock companies, almost innumerable, were established, to accomplish all sorts of undertakings. There were thirty-three companies for making canals and docks, forty-eight for making railroads, forty-two for gas, twenty insurance companies, twenty-three banking companies, twelve navigation packet companies, five indigo and sugar companies, thirty-four metal companies, and many others. The amount of capital subscribed in these various companies, which numbered two hundred and seventy-six, was upwards of £174,000,000. In connection with South America, there was the Anglo-Mexican company, the Brazilian, the Columbian, Real de Monte and the United Mexican. On the South American shares only ten pounds each had been paid, except the Real de Monte, on

* "Quarterly Review," xxxii., p. 189.

which £70 had been paid. We may judge of the extent to which gambling speculation was carried from the following statement of the market prices of the shares, in five of the principal mining companies, at two periods, December 10th, 1824, and January 11th, 1825:—

	December 10th.			January 11th.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Anglo Mexican	33	0	0	158	0	0
Brazilian	0	10	0	66	0	0
Columbian	19	0	0	82	0	0
Real de Monte	550	0	0	1,350	0	0
United Mexican	35	0	0	1,550	0	0

In the course of this commercial madness our imports greatly exceeded our exports, and there was consequently a rapid drain of specie from this country. The drain of bullion from the bank of England was immense. In August, 1823, it had £12,658,240, which, in August, 1825, was reduced to £3,634,320, and before the end of the year it ran as low as £1,027,000. Between July, 1824, and August, 1825, twelve millions of cash were exported from this country, chiefly to South America. During the revolutionary war, which had lasted for fourteen years, the capital of the country had been completely exhausted, while all productive labour had been abandoned. The unworked mines were filled with water. They were accessible, it is true, to English speculators, but they were worked exclusively with English capital. The South American mining companies were so many conduits through which a rapid stream of gold flowed from this country. The catastrophe that followed took the commercial world by surprise; even the chancellor of the exchequer failed to anticipate the disaster. On the contrary, his budget of 1825 was based upon the most sanguine expectations for the future, and on the assurance that the public prosperity was the very reverse of what was ephemeral and peculiar, and that it arose from something inherent in the nation. Even at the prorogation of parliament in July, the royal speech referred to the "great and growing" prosperity on which his majesty had the happiness of congratulating the country at the beginning of the session. The commercial crisis, however, with wide-spread ruin in its train, was fast coming upon the country. Vast importations, intended to meet an undiminished demand at high prices, glutted all the markets, and caused prices to fall rapidly. Merchants sought accommodation from their bankers to meet pressing liabilities, that they might be enabled to hold over their goods till prices rallied. This accommodation the bankers were unable to afford, and sales were therefore effected at a ruinous loss. The South American mines, it was found, could not be worked at a profit, and they made no return for the twenty million pounds of British money which they had swallowed up. The effect was a sudden contraction of the currency, and a general stoppage of banking accommodation. The country banks, whose issues had risen to £14,000,000, were run upon till their specie was exhausted, and a number of them were obliged to stop payment. The Plymouth bank was the first to fail, and in the next three weeks seventy banks followed in rapid succession. The London houses were besieged from morning to night by clamorous crowds, all demanding gold for their notes. Con-

sternation spread through all classes. There was a universal pressure of creditors upon debtors, the banks that survived being themselves upon the edge of the precipice; and the bank of England itself, pushed to the last extremity, peremptorily refused accommodation even to their best customers. Persons worth one hundred thousand pounds could not command one hundred pounds; money seemed to have taken to itself wings and fled away, producing a state of society in the highest degree artificial, almost to the condition of primitive barbarism, which led Mr. Huskisson to exclaim, "We were within twenty-four hours of *barter*."*

It is impossible to conceive the extent of suffering and desolation inflicted upon society, almost every family being involved, more or less, in the general calamity. Flourishing firms bankrupt, opulent merchants impoverished, the masses of working people suddenly thrown out of employment, and reduced to destitution; and all from causes with which the majority had nothing to do—causes that could have been prevented by a proper monetary system. If bank of England notes had been a legal tender, to all intents and purposes supplying the place of gold as currency; if these notes had been supplied to the country banks in any quantities they required, ample security being taken to have assets equal to their respective issues, then the currency would have had an elastic, self-adjusting power, expanding or contracting according to the requirements of commerce. Inordinate speculation would not have been stimulated by a reckless system of credit, and business would have been conducted in a moderate and judicious manner, instead of rushing on at a high pressure, that rendered a crash inevitable. The government, after anxious and repeated deliberations, supplied a remedy on this principle. They determined to issue one pound and two pound notes of the bank of England, for country circulation, to any amount required. In the meantime, the Mint was set to work with all its resources in the coining of sovereigns, which, for the course of a week, were thrown off at the rate of 150,000 a-day. The notes could not be manufactured fast enough to meet the enormous demand for carrying on the business of the country. In this dilemma, the bank was relieved by a most fortunate discovery—a box containing £700,000, in one and two pound notes, that had been retired, which were at once put into circulation. The people having thus got notes with government security, the panic subsided, and the demand for gold gradually ceased. The restoration of confidence was aided by resolutions passed at a meeting of bankers and merchants in the city of London, declaring that the unprecedented embarrassments and difficulties under which the circulation of the country laboured were mainly to be ascribed to a general panic, for which there were no reasonable grounds; that they had the fullest confidence in the means and substance of the banking establishments of the capital and the country; that returning confidence would remove all the symptoms of distress caused by the alarms of the timid, so fatal to those who were forced to sacrifice their property to meet

* Tooke on Prices," vol. II., pp. 156—161.

sudden and unexpected demands. The new measures, so promptly adopted, and so vigorously carried into effect, raised the circulation of the bank of England in three weeks from £17,477,290 to £25,611,800. Thus the regular and healthful action of the monetary system was restored by an adequate circulation of paper money, on government security, without specie to sustain it. There were at the time of the crash, 770 country bankers; 63 stopped payment, 23 of them having subsequently resumed business, and paid twenty shillings in the pound; and even those that were not able to resume, paid an average of seventeen shillings and sixpence in the pound.* It was estimated that the total loss to the country by this panic was one hundred million pounds. There is truth in the following reflections of Sir Archibald Alison upon this crisis:—"From the first introduction of the metallic system in 1819, to the extension of the paper circulation in 1822, the history of the country is nothing but the narrative of the dreadful effects produced by the contraction of the currency to the extent of above a third of its former amount, and the social distress and political agitation consequent on the fall in the price of every article of commerce to little more than the half of its former level. Its annals, from the extension of the currency in July, 1822, to the dreadful crash of December, 1825, illustrate the opposite set of dangers with which the same system is fraught, when the precious metals flow in in abundance, from the undue encouragement given to speculation of every kind, by the general rise of prices for a brief period. To make paper plentiful when gold is plentiful, and paper scarce when gold is scarce, is not only a dangerous system, at all times, and under all circumstances, but is precisely the reverse of what should be established. It alternately aggravates the dangers arising from over-speculation, and induces the distress consequent on over-contraction. The true system would be the very reverse, and it would prevent the whole of the evils which the preceding pages have unfolded. It would be based on the principle of making paper a supplement to the metallic currency, and a substitute for it when required, not a representative of it; and plentifully issued when the specie is withdrawn, it should be contracted when it returns. Thus, over-speculation at one time, and monetary distress at another, would be alike avoided; and an equal circulation would maintain the health of the social system, as it unquestionably does of animal life."†

Such a tremendous crash in the commercial world could not have occurred without involving the working classes in the deepest distress. By comparing the conduct of the people in the manufacturing districts at that time with the conduct of the distressed operatives in Lancashire at present, we see what wonderful progress has been made in popular intelligence, social order, and Christian civilisation. Now the severest destitution is borne with admirable patience, without a single instance of combination; without any violation of the rights of property, or breaking of machinery; without resentment against employers, or

capitalists, or the government. The popular education, which the tory party predicted would lead to popular discontent, insubordination, and lawless violence, has had quite the opposite effect. It has enabled the working classes to comprehend the economic laws which regulate society, to respect the rights of property, to preserve the public peace, and to submit without murmuring to a calamity which neither their rulers nor their employers could have foreseen or prevented. In order fully to understand all that society has gained by the instruction of the people, by extending to them the blessings of education, and especially by the diffusion of useful knowledge through the medium of cheap literature, we have only to read the records of popular disturbance and destructive violence which occurred in 1825 and 1826. In the August of the following year there was a combination of seamen against the shipowners at Sunderland; and on one occasion there was a riot, when a mob of some hundreds flung the crew of a collier into the sea. They were rescued from drowning, but, the military having fired on the rioters, five persons were killed. Their funeral was made the occasion of a great popular demonstration. There was a procession with flags, and a band of singers, twelve hundred seamen walking hand in hand, each with crape round the left arm. In the Isle of Man the people rose against the tithing of their potatoes, and were quieted only by the assurance that the tithe would not be demanded of them, either that year or at any future time. In the spring of 1826 the operatives of Lancashire rose up in open war against the power-loom, the main cause of the marvellous prosperity that has since so largely contributed to the wealth of England. They believed that the power-loom was the cause of their distress, and in one day every power-loom in Blackburn, and within six miles of it, was smashed; the spinning machinery having been carefully preserved, though at one time the spinning jennies were as obnoxious as the power-loom. The work of destruction was not confined to one town or neighbourhood. The mob proceeded from town to town, wrecking mill after mill, seizing upon bread in the bakers' shops, and regaling themselves freely in public-houses. They paraded the streets in formidable numbers, armed with whatever weapons they could lay hands on—scythes, sledge-hammers, and long knives. They resisted the troops fiercely, showering upon them stones and other missiles. The troops, in their turn, fired upon the crowds, and when they were dispersed the streets were stained with blood, the mob carrying away their wounded into the fields. In one week no less than a thousand power-loom were destroyed, valued at thirty thousand pounds. In Manchester the mob broke the windows in the shops. At Carlisle, Norwich, Trowbridge, and other places in England, similar lawless proceedings occurred. Even in Glasgow the blame of the general distress was thrown upon the machinery, not only by the ignorant operatives, but by the gentry and the magistrates. In Dublin the silk-weavers marched through the streets, to exhibit their wretchedness. The distress was greatly aggravated, and spread over the whole country, by the extraordinary drought which prevailed in the summer of 1826. The richest meadows were burnt up. The stunted grain crops were only a few inches in height. The cattle,

* Tooke, vol. ii., p. 162.

† "History of Europe," vol. iii., p. 753

and even the deer in noblemen's parks, died from thirst. The people sat up all night to watch the springs, waiting for their turn to be supplied. Water was retailed in small quantities, and sold like beer. Those who occupied the more favoured districts sent jars of fresh water to their friends in other places, as most acceptable presents. In the midst of all this scarcity and suffering the corn laws stopped the supplies of provisions from abroad, which were ready to be poured in in any quantities. Bills had been passed with great difficulty through parliament, to enable government to relax the restrictions of the corn laws, in order to meet the emergency. But so clogged were those enactments with conditions, that in autumn ministers were obliged to anticipate their operation by opening the ports, trusting to the legislature for an indemnity. It is melancholy to reflect upon the perplexities and miseries in which the country was involved through the mistaken views of the landed interest, then predominant in parliament. One important result of this terrible distress was to force on emigration to a large extent, and thus to people our American colonies. Emigration at that time was without any guidance, and the result was a vast amount of disappointment and suffering among the emigrants. Consequently, Mr. Wilmot Horton moved for a select committee to inquire into the expediency of encouraging emigration from the United Kingdom. The committee was appointed, and presented its report and evidence before the dissolution of parliament, with a recommendation that the subject should be pursued without loss of time. It is with societies as with individuals, latent energies are roused into action by disastrous vicissitudes; and the discipline of severe trials develops and trains the strength by which inevitable calamities can be borne, and the wisdom and providence by which avoidable evils can be foreseen and prevented. The lessons taught by the events of those years of public distress and social agony were turned to good account in our subsequent legislation, and much was done, as we shall have occasion to show, for the removal of the dams that impeded the flow of the bounties of Providence, and the popular ignorance which enormously aggravates the evils incident to all human societies.

CHAPTER X.

The Irish Government—The Marquis of Wellesley—Condition of the Peasantry—Causes of Irish Poverty—Exaggeration—The Orange Society—King William—The "Bottle Riot"—Prosecution of the Orangemen—The Catholic Question—Sir Robert Peel—The Catholic Association—Its Suppression—The new Catholic Association—The Catholic Relief Bill of 1825—Declaration of the Duke of York.

LORD REDESDALE in a letter to lord Eldon, written in 1821, soon after the king's visit, gave expression to some important truths about the government of Ireland. "Ministers," he said, "have fancied that Ireland would do better without a lord lieutenant, and some of them have called his office a useless pageant, but under the present circumstances they would govern the colonies as well without governors as they can govern Ireland without that pageant. If the pageant is useless, it is because they make it useless, because they give him a secretary to thwart him, or to be a viceroy over him. The office of lord lieutenant requires, in

my opinion, a considerable portion of ability, sound judgment, discretion, firmness, good temper, and conciliating manners. Such a lord lieutenant ought to be supreme. If ministers think fit to appoint to such an office a man wholly unqualified for it, they must put him in leading-strings, and give him a secretary with all the qualities the lord lieutenant ought to have; and, moreover, with a disposition to conceal rather than display his power over his superior—to lead, and not to command, the lord lieutenant. In England the machine goes on almost of itself, and therefore a bad driver may manage it tolerably well. It is not so in Ireland. The country requires great exertion to bring it into a state of order and submission to law. The whole population—high and low, rich and poor, catholic and protestant—must all be brought to obedience to law; all must be taught to look up to the law for protection. The gentry are ready enough to attend grand juries, to obtain presentments for their own benefit, but they desert the quarter-sessions of the peace. The first act of a constable in arrest must not be to knock down the prisoner; and many, many reforms must be made, which only can be effected by a judicious and able government *on the spot*. Ireland, in its present state, cannot be governed in England. If insubordination compels you to give, how are you to retain by law what you propose to maintain while insubordination remains? It can only be by establishing completely the empire of the law."

The marquis of Wellesley was sent over to Ireland by lord Liverpool, in order to govern Ireland upon this principle; and he might have succeeded better if he had not been checked by Mr. Goulburn, the chief secretary, distinguished by his hostility to catholic emancipation, who was appointed "viceroy over him." In a letter which the marquis wrote to the duke of Buckingham (June 14th, 1824), he refers to some of the difficulties with which he had to contend in carrying out an impartial policy between the extreme parties, which were then very violent. His labours, however, in enforcing respect for the law and effecting improvements, were not altogether in vain. "The situation of Ireland," he writes, "although very unsatisfactory, is certainly much improved, and foundations of greater improvement have been firmly laid. The committees of parliament have done much good; and, if vigorously and fairly pursued, may effect a permanent settlement of this distracted country. The present violent collision of the two ultra parties, or rather factions, orange and papist, is a crisis of the disorder which was necessary to their mutual dissolution, an event which I think is fast approaching, and which must be the preliminary of any settlement of peace." In a postscript, he distinguishes "orange and papist" from "protestant and catholic," an important distinction, which ought still to be observed, the word *ultramontane* being used in the present day as a substitute for papist, to designate the extreme anti-English and anti-protestant party in Ireland.

The evils of the social state of Ireland were bad enough, without being aggravated by the virulence of faction. The result of numerous parliamentary inquiries, and the observations of travellers from foreign countries, was to present a state of society the most deplorable that can well be ima-

gined in any civilised country under a Christian government. Many of the lower orders, especially in Munster and Connaught, as well as in mountainous districts of the other provinces, maintained a state of existence the most wretched than can be conceived. They lived in cabins built of mud, imperfectly covered with sods and straw, consisting generally of one room, without any window, with a chimney which admitted the rain, but did not carry off the smoke. They had little or nothing that deserves the name of furniture; their food consisted of potatoes and salt, with milk or a herring sometimes, as a luxury; their wages, when they got work, were only sixpence or fourpence a-day. They subsisted on small patches of land, which were continually sub-divided, as the children got married, the population at the same time multiplying with astonishing rapidity. When the potatoes and the turf failed, towards summer, the men went off to seek harvest work in the low lands and richer districts of the country, and in England and Scotland. The women, locking up the doors, set forth with the children to beg, the youngest of the lot being wrapped up in blankets, and carried on their backs. They passed on from parish to parish, getting a night's lodging, as they proceeded, in a chimney corner or in a barn, from the better part of the peasantry and farmers, who shared with them their potatoes, and gave them "a lock of straw" to sleep on. Thus they migrated from county to county, eastward and northward, towards the sea, lazily reposing in the sunshine by the wayside, their children enjoying a wild kind of gipsy freedom, but growing up in utter ignorance, uncared for by anybody, unrecognised by the clergy of any church. The great proprietors were for the most part absentees, who had let their lands, generally in large tracts, to "middlemen," a sort of small gentry, or "squireens," as they were called, who sub-let at a rack-rent to the peasantry. Upon these rack-rented, ignorant cultivators of the soil fell a great portion of the burden of supporting the established clergy, as well as their own priesthood. The tithes were levied exclusively off tillage, the rector or vicar claiming by law a tenth of the crop, which was valued by his "tithe proctors," and unless compounded for in money, which was generally done by the "strong farmers," before the crop left the field, the tenth sheaf must have been set aside to be borne away on the carts of the protestant clergyman, who was regarded by the people that thus supported him as the teacher of heresy.

From the conquest down to the present time, it must be confessed that Ireland has been a difficulty with the English government—a difficulty which still subsists, though in a very mitigated form. If Sir Archibald Alison, and the authorities whom he has followed, be right as to the causes of it, there seems no probability that the difficulty will ever cease. According to them, though brave, ardent, generous, and highly gifted in genius, with many estimable and amiable qualities in private life, the Celtic population have none of the dispositions which qualify them for attaining temporal superiority in life, or for constructing without external direction the fabric of social happiness. Gay, volatile, and inconsiderate, the Irish enjoy the present without a thought of the future; they are incapable of foresight, or self-con-

trol, or self-direction, or self-government. The greater the privileges they enjoy, the more degraded they become. This is one element of the difficulty. In the next place, the conquest of Ireland by the English is represented as a main source of Irish misery, because of "the atrocious system of confiscation, which, in conformity with the feudal usages, the victors introduced on every occasion of rebellion against their authority. Without doubt," says Sir Archibald, "this conquest is to be traced to the instability of the Irish character; for why did they not keep out the English invaders, as the Scotch, with half their number, and not a quarter of their material resources, effectually did? But admitting this, as every candid mind must do, there can be no doubt that the conquest of the country, and consequent confiscation of the estates, has been an evil of the very first magnitude to Ireland: Thence have flowed the bestowing of the forfeited estates on English nobles and companies, the middlemen, who were to collect their rents and remit them to this country, and the fatal imposition of a host of persons, all of whom lived on their labour, and wrung the last shilling out of their earnings." The third cause assigned for the miseries of Ireland is the existence of the Roman catholic religion, which encourages the increase of population, for the sake of marriage fees, embitters the relations between landlords and tenants, and exposes the cultivators of the soil to the double exactions of two sets of clergy. These three causes it seems impossible to remove. The nature of the Celtic population cannot be changed; the confiscated estates cannot be restored to the day labourers, who claim to be the descendants of the original proprietors; England cannot forego the fruits of her conquest; and the Roman catholic religion cannot be rooted out. Consequently, if these great causes of Irish discontent possess all the force assigned to them by this conservative historian, there is very little hope for the country. But their influence for evil has been greatly exaggerated. France is a Celtic nation, yet she has a well organised society, and has been long one of the leading states in Europe. Roman catholic countries have proved themselves capable of civilisation and progress, and Ireland, notwithstanding her disadvantages, has improved during the years 1849-62 perhaps more rapidly than any country in Europe. It is very questionable whether the state of the country would have been as good, had the English conquest never occurred. In no part of the island are the tenantry more contented, better ordered, or more prosperous than on the forfeited estates, which are now held by English proprietors and London companies. The exaggerations of Sir Archibald Alison are really astounding. He states that the sums levied annually on the poor, for the support of the poor, before the establishment of the poor law system, was £1,500,000, whereas their contributions consisted merely in giving some remnants of their meals to the beggars that came to their doors, whose numbers are represented as amounting to two millions, equal to the whole population of Scotland. He represents nearly the whole of the landlords as having emigrated to London, Paris, and Italy, where they spent their incomes, being known to their tenantry only by the "unwelcome visits of bailiffs to collect the rents." He divides the whole remain-

ingpopulation, including all classes, from the highest to the lowest, as leagued in secret societies. "Thus," he observes, "in addition to all other causes of discord, the landholders and peasantry of Ireland became arrayed in opposite and nearly equally dangerous secret associations; for the chief proprietors were office-bearers in the orange lodges, and the great body of the catholics were members of the ribbon lodges, or belonged to the Catholic Association, which came to play so important a part in the annals of that unhappy country." In the same strain of wholesale misrepresentation, he describes the best acts of the higher orders as being never set down by the lower orders to any motive but the worst, and states that the country was cursed, rather than blessed, by British institutions, including trial by jury.

Perhaps there is no cause from which Ireland has suffered more than from misrepresentations like these. Nowhere has the want of discrimination, and due allowance for the extravagant exaggerations of vehement partisans, been more pernicious. There were in the reign of George IV.



IRISH HOVEL IN THE FAR WEST.

house of commons, in February, 1825, described the country as in a state of peace and prosperity. She had been enabled, by the noble lord at the head of the government, and by the measures which he had matured, to enjoy the blessings which were the offspring of internal tranquillity. Those measures had been properly administered, and public confidence had been in consequence restored. "It was a great blessing," he said, "it was a most gratifying object, to behold that country now floating on the tide of public confidence and public prosperity. She was lying on the breakers, almost a wreck, when the noble marquis arrived; and if he had not taken the measures which have been so successfully adopted, she never could have floated on that tide of public prosperity."*

The attorney-general defied the enemies of the administration to point out a single instance in which the viceroy had deviated from the line of strict impartiality, yet he was the object of most virulent attacks by the fanatical members of the orange societies in Dublin, and by the orange press. Their animosity was excited to the



MAYO MUD CABIN.

no evils in Ireland which would not have yielded to the action of just and impartial government, removing real grievances, and extending to the people, in a confiding spirit, the blessings of the British constitution, in the spirit of lord Wellesley's administration. He had to contend, indeed, with peculiar difficulties. Ireland shared largely in the general distress of the United Kingdom, occasioned by the contraction of the currency, and the consequent low prices of agricultural produce. He found a great portion of the south in a state of licentiousness, surpassing the worst excesses of former unhappy times; he had to deal with dangerous and secret conspiracies in other parts of the country. He applied the energies of his powerful mind to master these complicated difficulties, in the spirit of conciliation, which had been enjoined in the king's instructions. He explored every dangerous and untried path, and he laboured diligently, by the equal administration of the laws, to promote peace and happiness among all classes of the people. He succeeded to a great extent in accomplishing the object of his administration. Mr. Plunket, the Irish attorney-general, in his speech on unlawful societies, in the

utmost by a proceeding which he adopted with reference to the statue of king William in College Green. For some years a set of low persons, connected with the orange lodges, had been in the habit of bedaubing the statue with ridiculous painting and tawdry orange colours, with a fantastic drapery of orange scarfs. The Roman catholics believed that this was done with the avowed purpose of insulting them, and they thought that they had as much right to undress as others had to dress a public statue. On one occasion, therefore, they painted king William with lampblack. Consequently, on the 12th of July, 1822, a serious riot occurred, in the course of which lives were endangered, the tranquillity of the metropolis disturbed, and evil passions of the most furious kind engendered in the minds of the parties. As the peace must be preserved, the only course was to put an end to those senseless brawls by ordering that no unauthorised parties should presume to put their hands on a public monument, either for the purpose of decorating or defiling it. But this judicious order the

* Plunket's "Speeches," p. 326.



MR. O'CONNELL PROPOSING THE FORMATION OF THE CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION.

orangemen felt to be a wrong, which should be resented and avenged by driving lord Wellesley out of the country. Accordingly, certain members of the orange society, amounting to nearly one hundred, entered into a conspiracy to mob him in the theatre. They were supplied with pit-tickets, and assembling early at the door, they rushed in, and took possession of the seat immediately under the viceregal box. Other parties of them went to the galleries. They agreed upon the watchword, "Look out." They had previously printed handbills, which were freely distributed in and about the theatre, containing insulting expressions, such as, "Down with the popish government!" Before the viceroy arrived, they had been crying for groans for the "popish lord lieutenant," for the house of Wellesley, for the duke of Wellington. When the marquis arrived he was received with general cheering, that overbore the orange hisses; but during the playing of the national anthem the offensive noise became so alarming that some of the audience left the theatre. At this moment a bottle was flung from one of the galleries, which was supposed to be aimed at the head of the lord lieutenant, and which fell near his box.

Some of the offenders were prosecuted. Bills against them were sent up to the grand jury of the city of Dublin. But as this body was influenced by a strong orange animus, the bills were thrown out. Mr. Plunket then proceeded by *ex-officio* informations, which raised a tremendous outcry against the government, as having violated the constitution, and a resolution to that effect was moved by Mr. Brownlow in the house of commons. It turned out, however, that his predecessor, Mr. Saurin, one of his most vehement accusers, who alleged that the course was altogether unprecedented, had himself established the precedent ten or twelve years before. Forgetting this fact, he denounced the conduct of Mr. Plunket as "the most flagrant violation of constitutional principle that had ever been attempted." The trial in the Court of Queen's Bench, which commenced on February 3rd, 1823, produced the greatest possible excitement. The ordinary occupations of life appeared to be laid aside in the agitating expectation of the event. As soon as the doors were opened, one tremendous rush of the waiting multitude filled in an instant the galleries, and every avenue of the court. The result of the trial was, that the jury disagreed, the traversers were let out on bail, the attorney-general threatening to prosecute again; but the proceedings were never revived.

But in the midst of all this strife and turmoil the work of real amelioration steadily proceeded. The tithe proctor system was a great and galling grievance to protestants as well as Roman catholics, but especially to the latter, who constituted the mass of the tillers of the soil. Such an odious impost tended to discourage cultivation, and threw the land into pasture. The Tithe Commutation Act was therefore passed, in order to enable the tenant to pay a yearly sum, instead of having the tenth of his crop carried away in kind, or its equivalent levied, according to the valuation of the minister's proctor. It was proposed to make the act compulsory upon all rectors, but this was so vehemently resisted by the church party, that it was left optional. If the measure had been compulsory, the anti-

tithe war, which afterwards occurred, accompanied by violence and bloodshed, would have been avoided. It was, however, carried into operation to a large extent, and with the most satisfactory results. Within a few months after the enactment, more than one thousand applications had been made from parishes to carry its requirements into effect. In 1824, on the motion of Mr. Hume for an inquiry into the condition of the Irish church establishment, with a view to its reduction, Mr. Leslie Foster furnished statistics, from which it appeared that the proportion of Roman catholics to protestants was four to one. In Ulster, at that time, the Roman catholic population was little more than half the number of protestants.

The year 1824 is memorable in Ireland for the establishment of the Catholic Association. The catholic question had lain dormant since the union. Ireland remained in a state of political stupor. There was a "catholic committee," indeed, under the direction of a gentleman of property, Mr. John Keogh, of Mount Jerome, near Dublin. But his voice was feeble, and seldom heard. The councils of the Roman catholics were much distracted. Many of the bishops, and most of the gentry, recommended prudence and patience as the best policy. Liberal statesmen in England were willing to make concessions, but the conscientious scruples of George III. had presented an insuperable barrier in the way of civil equality. There was an annual motion on the subject—first by Grattan, then by Plunket, and lastly by Burdett; but it attracted very little attention, till the formidable power of the Catholic Association excited general alarm for the stability of our institutions. Adverting to the past history of Ireland—her geographical position, her social state in respect to the tenure of property, and the numbers of the respective religious denominations of her people—the ablest conservative statesmen considered that it would be extremely difficult to reconcile the perfect equality of civil privilege, or rather the *bona fide* practical application of that principle with those objects on the inviolable maintenance of which the friends and opponents of catholic emancipation were completely agreed—namely, the legislative union, and the established church. There was the danger of abolishing tests, which had been established for the express purpose of giving to the legislature a protestant character—tests which had been established not upon vague constitutional theories, but after practical experience of the evils which had been inflicted and the dangers which had been incurred by the struggles for ascendancy at periods not remote from the present. There was the danger that the removal of civil disabilities might materially alter the relations in which the Roman catholic religion stood to the state. Sir Robert Peel, in his "Memoirs," states those difficulties at great length, and in all their force. He fully admits that "the protestant interest" had an especial claim upon his devotion and his faithful service, from the part which he had uniformly taken on the catholic question, from the confidence reposed in him on that account, and from his position in parliament, as the representative of the university of Oxford. He thus shows in what manner, and under what constraining sense of duty, he responded to that claim: "And if the duty which that acknowledged claim imposed upon me were this—that in a

crisis of extreme difficulty I should calmly contemplate and compare the dangers with which the protestant interest was threatened from different quarters—that I should advise a course which I believe to be the least unsafe—that having advised and adopted, I should resolutely adhere to it—that I should disregard every selfish consideration—that I should prefer obloquy and reproach to the aggravation of existing evils, by concealing my real opinion, and by maintaining the false show of personal consistency—if this were the duty imposed upon me, I fearlessly assert that it was most faithfully and scrupulously discharged.”

The crisis of extreme difficulty to which Sir Robert Peel referred in this passage was occasioned by the dangerous power acquired by the Catholic Association, which had originated in the following manner. Early in the year 1823, Mr. O'Connell proposed to his brother barrister, Mr. Sheil, and a party of friends who were dining with Mr. O'Mara, at Glancullen, the plan of an association for the management of the catholic cause. At an aggregate meeting of the Roman catholics, which took place in April, a resolution with the same design was carried, and on Monday, the 12th of May, the first meeting of the Catholic Association was held in Dempsey's rooms, in Sackville Street. Subsequently it met at the house of a Roman catholic bookseller, named Coyne, and before a month had passed, it was in active working order. From these small beginnings, it became, in the course of the year, one of the most extensive, compact, and powerful popular organisations the world had ever seen. Its influence ramified into every parish in Ireland. It found a place and work for almost every member of the Roman catholic body; the peer, the lawyer, the merchant, the country gentleman, the peasant, and, above all, the priest, had each his task assigned him: getting up petitions, forming deputations to the government and to parliament, conducting electioneering business, watching over the administration of justice, collecting “the catholic rent,” preparing resolutions, and making speeches at the meetings of the association, which were held every Monday at the Corn Exchange, when everything in the remotest degree connected with the interests of Roman catholics or of Ireland was the subject of animating and exciting discussion, conducted in the form of popular harangues, by barristers, priests, merchants, and others. Voluminous correspondence was read by the secretary, large sums of rent were handed in, fresh members were enrolled, and speeches were made to a crowd of excited and applauding people, generally composed of Dublin operatives and idlers. But as the proceedings were fully reported in the public journals, the audience may be said to have been the Irish nation. And over all, “the voice of O'Connell, like some mighty minster bell, was heard through Ireland, and the empire, and the world.” Mr. Wyse, the historian of the association, says: “It guided the people, and thus raised itself in raising the people. In the short space of two years, what had long defied the anxious exertions of all preceding bodies was tranquilly accomplished. The ‘three hands,’ the three classes, were found in one, the penal statute was the *force* which clasped them. The entire country formed but one association.” The declared

objects of the association were—“1st, to forward petitions to parliament; 2nd, to afford relief to catholics assailed by orange lodges; 3rd, to encourage and support a liberal and independent press, as well in Dublin as in London—such a press as might report faithfully the arguments of their friends, and refute the calumnies of their enemies; 4th, to procure cheap publications for the various schools in the country; 5th, to afford aid to Irish catholics in America; and, 6th, to afford aid to the English catholics.” Such were the ostensible objects of the association, but it aimed at a great deal more than is here expressed. It was formed on a plan different from all other associations in Ireland. It proposed to redress all grievances, local or general, affecting the people. It undertook as many questions as ever engaged the attention of a legislature. “They undertook,” said the attorney-general Plunket, “the great question of parliamentary reform; they undertook the repeal of the union; they undertook the regulation of church property; they undertook the administration of justice. They intended not merely to consider the administration of justice, in the common acceptance of the term; but they determined on the visitation of every court, from that of the highest authority down to the court of conscience. They did not stop here. They were not content with an interference with courts; they were resolutely bent on interfering with the adjudication of every cause which affected the catholics, whom they styled ‘the people of Ireland.’”

The association had become so formidable, and was yet so carefully kept within the bounds of law by “counsellor O'Connell,” in whose legal skill the Roman catholics of all classes had unbounded confidence, that the government resolved to procure an act of parliament for its suppression. Accordingly, on the 11th of February, 1825, a bill was brought into the house of commons by the Irish chief secretary, Mr. Goulburn, under the title of Unlawful Societies in Ireland Bill. The plural form caused a great deal of debating. The government declared they wished to include the Orange Society, as well as the Catholic Association. But the opposition had no faith in this declaration, and Mr. Brougham stated that they would put down the Catholic Association with one hand, and pat the Orange Society on the back with the other. The debates on the subject were very animated, and touched upon constitutional questions of the widest interest to the public. The argument against the association was conducted by Goulburn, Plunket, Peel, Canning, and North. It was based upon the following considerations:—The association was really and *bonâ fide* acting as a representative body, as such enacting rules, issuing orders, and levying contributions, which were raised by the priests under penalty of ecclesiastical censure. The amount of the impost was the least part of the evil. It was the establishment of such a thing that constituted the danger, leading the people to look up to other authorities than those recognised by the constitution, and teaching them to place confidence in a rival power, created and sustained by themselves. The association was, besides, regarded by the government as a great centre of sedition, whence flowed through the press a perennial stream of turbulent

matter into every parish in the kingdom. The Roman catholic congregations were everywhere harangued from the altars by priests and minor members of the association—men devoid of caution and education, and uncontrolled by public opinion. The objects of the association were continually changing; no man could tell what they would be to-morrow, but, however dangerous they might be, the masses would implicitly follow their leaders. Looking at the means, power, and influence it possessed, and the vast authority with which it was armed, who could seriously think of giving stability and power to its existence? "Self-elected, self-controlled, self-assembled, self-adjourned, acknowledging no superior, tolerating no equal, interfering in all stages with the administration of justice, denouncing individuals publicly before trial, re-judging and condemning those whom it has absolved, menacing the independent press with punishment, and openly announcing its intention to corrupt that part of it which it cannot intimidate, and for these and other purposes levying contributions on the whole people of Ireland—is this an association which, from its mere form and attributes, independent of any religious opinion, the legislature can tolerate?" Ireland was sharing the general prosperity, but the malignity of this association retarded and endangered that prosperity by disturbing tranquillity, weakening public confidence, setting neighbour against neighbour and class against class, diverting the minds of the people from profitable occupations, discouraging agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and all the arts of peace—frightening from the Irish shores the enterprise and capital of England, from which the tide of wealth had been setting in so strongly.

The Irish attorney-general said he did not deny that if a set of gentlemen thought fit to unite for those purposes, it was in their power to do so; but then came the question as to the means which they employ, and those means he denied to be constitutional. "They have," he said, "associated with them the catholic clergy, the catholic nobility, many of the catholic gentry, and all the surviving delegates of 1791. They have established committees in every district, who keep up an extensive correspondence through the country. This association, consisting originally of a few members, has now increased to 3,000. They proceeded to establish a Roman catholic rent; and in every single parish, of the 2,500 parishes into which Ireland is divided, they appointed twelve Roman catholic collectors, which make an army of 30,000. Having this their army of collectors, they brought to their assistance 2,500 priests, and the whole ecclesiastical body. And thus provided, they go about levying contributions on the peasantry."

This Mr. Plunket pronounced to be unconstitutional, though not in the strict sense illegal; the association was a representative and a tax-levying body. He denied that any portion of the subjects of this realm had a right to give their suffrages to others, had a right to select persons to speak their sentiments, to debate upon their grievances, and to devise measures for their removal. This was the privilege alone of the commons of the United Kingdom. He would not allow that species of power

to anybody not subjected to proper control. But to whom were those individuals accountable? Where was their responsibility? Who was to check them? Who was to stop their progress? By whom were they to be tried or rebuked, if found acting mischievously? People not acquainted with Ireland were not aware of the nature of this formidable instrument of power, greater than the power of the sword. Individuals connected with it went into every house and every family. They mixed in all the relations of private life, and afterwards detailed what they heard with the utmost freedom. The attorney-general could not conceive a more deadly instrument of tyranny than it was, when it interfered with the administration of justice. Claiming to represent six millions of the people of Ireland, it denounced as a public enemy, and arraigned at the bar of justice, any individual it chose to accuse of acting contrary to the popular interest. Thus the grand inquest of the people were the accusers, and there was an unlimited supply of money to carry on the prosecution. The consequence was, that magistrates were intimidated, feeling that there was no alternative but to yield, or be overwhelmed by the tide of fierce, popular passions.

The association found able defenders in Sir Henry Parnell, Mr. Brougham, and Sir James Macintosh, who argued to the following effect:—

It is the exclusion of the Roman catholics from parliament which is the sole cause of the existence of the association; and how can the house of commons, after having, in 1821, solemnly recognised their right to seats in this house, interfere now to put down an association the object of which is to obtain that very act of justice? Emancipate the catholics, and the association will at once die a natural death. Refuse that concession, and how can you persecute those who support it? The proceedings of the association have no real danger belonging to them; there is no treason or insurrection connected with them, no obstruction to government, no injury to life or property. The outcry is wholly artificial, and kept up studiously by the party who wished to stop the emancipation. Even if the Catholic Association had been the dangerous body which it is said to be, the character of its leaders, and especially of Mr. O'Connell, is a sufficient guarantee against their being betrayed into dangerous excesses. It has already effected the union of the entire catholic body; it has directed public attention to their numerous grievances; it has called forth the talents of a large portion of the public press in their support; and by inducing this very debate, it will go far to open the eyes of the English people to the injustice towards Ireland to which they have so long been a party. Why, then, interfere to suppress an association the sole design of which is to effect an object which this house has solemnly approved, to terminate a great and crying injustice, to bring about a great and healing act of justice? The object of the bill is to put down an association which is doing nothing illegal, and which is an object of dread from the justice of its cause, and the reality of the grievances of which it complains. Excited as the people of Ireland are from the knowledge of the grievances they

have so long endured, it is desirable that they should be under the control of leaders who may direct their energies to legal and beneficial objects. Deprived of such control, six millions of people, banded together for thirty years by a sense of common wrongs, and trained by hidden societies in all the practical courses of secret assassination and open insurrection, if any fixed determination to make a great popular effort should seize possession of their minds, in vain would the catholic nobility, the catholic lawyers, and even the catholic clergy exert their utmost endeavours to check them, and universal ruin must be the inevitable result of such popular efforts. These millions, they said, are increasing at the rate of duplication in twenty-five or thirty years. Is it not plain, therefore, that it is not only expedient, but has become a matter of absolute necessity, to break up the secret government which has so long directed the energies of the Irish people to violence and outrage, and attach them, by equal rule and reciprocity of advantages, to the laws and the union of England? And what is the object of the association but to avert these terrible disasters, and bring about, by open, fair, and legal means, this blessed consummation? This, they asserted, is the first of a course of measures that inevitably will end in general confusion and rebellion. Ministers will come down to the house with a new case of the violation of the constitution, and call for a coercion act. This will lead to new acts, evasion, and violence on the part of the catholics, and so on, till they are trained by degrees to involve themselves in open insurrection. The union between the two islands had hitherto existed only on paper. Ireland was still, in feeling and in fact, a country foreign to England. The people form a clear notion of a distinct Irish and English nation, and the moment this bill passed into law they would regard it as a belligerent act, on the part of the English nation, against the Irish nation; and it would thereafter become impossible to negotiate a peace between the two countries.

It was thus the advocates of emancipation in the house of commons endeavoured to frighten the government. The bill, however, was passed. After a debate of four nights, the second reading was carried by the large majority of one hundred and fifty-five, the numbers being two hundred and seventy-eight to one hundred and twenty-three. In the house of lords the numbers were nearly four to one in favour of the measure, which was quickly passed into law. As soon as this fact was made known in Ireland, Mr. O'Connell moved that the society be dissolved. This was no sooner done than a new society was formed; and when the attorney-general returned to Ireland he found it in active operation. It was in reference to this proceeding O'Connell boasted that he could drive a coach-and-six through an act of parliament. It was declared that the new Catholic Association should not assume, or in any manner exercise, the power of acting for the purpose of obtaining redress of grievances in church or state, or any alteration in the law, or for the purpose of carrying on or assisting in the prosecution or defence of causes civil or criminal. Nothing could be more inoffensive or agreeable than its objects, which were to promote peace, harmony,

and tranquillity; to encourage a liberal and enlightened system of education; to ascertain the population of Ireland, and the comparative numbers of different persuasions; to devise means of erecting suitable catholic places of worship; to encourage Irish agriculture and manufactures, and to publish refutations of the charges against the catholics. Such was the new platform; but the speeches were of the same defiant and belligerent strain as before. The speakers still prayed that God Almighty would increase the dissensions and differences of the government, and rejoiced in the inspiring prospect of a cloud bursting on England from the north, where Russia had 1,300,000 men in arms.

On the 1st of March Sir Francis Burdett presented a catholic petition, and in a speech of great eloquence and force moved for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the grievances of which it complained. The question thus brought before the house of commons was one on which the cabinet was divided. Canning had come down to the house from a sick bed, and on a crutch, to give his support to the motion. Plunket delivered one of his most powerful speeches on the same side. Peel took upon himself the heavy task of replying to both. He was supported by Mr. Leslie Foster. Brougham closed the debate; and the motion was carried by a majority of thirteen, as already stated. Resolutions were adopted, and a bill founded upon them passed the commons, but it was lost in the upper house, where it was thrown out, on the 19th of May, by a majority of sixty-five. It was on that occasion that the duke of York, then heir presumptive to the throne, made the celebrated declaration against all concession to the catholics, which excited against him intense animosity in Ireland. At the conclusion of a vehement speech, he said:—"If I have expressed myself warmly, especially in the latter part of what I have said, I must appeal to your lordships' generosity. I feel the subject most forcibly; but it affects me the more deeply when I recollect that to its agitation must be ascribed that severe illness and ten years of misery which had clouded the existence of my beloved father. I shall therefore conclude with assuring your lordships that I have uttered my honest and conscientious sentiments, founded upon principles I have imbibed from my earliest youth, to the justice of which I have subscribed after careful consideration in maturer years; and these are the principles to which I will adhere, and which I will maintain, and that up to the latest moment of my existence, *whatever may be my situation of life*, so help me God!"

It was not protestants only that were alarmed at the democratic movement which was guided by O'Connell. The Roman catholic peers, both in England and Ireland, shared their apprehensions. Lord Redesdale, writing to lord Eldon, said:—"I learn that lord Fingall and others, catholics of English blood, are alarmed at the present state of things, and they may well be alarmed. If a revolution were to happen in Ireland, it would be in the end an Irish revolution, and no catholic of English blood would fare better than a protestant of English blood. So said Lord Castlehaven, an Irish catholic of English blood,

one hundred and seventy years ago, and so said a Roman catholic, confidentially to me, above twenty years ago. The question is not simply protestant and catholic, but English and Irish; and the great motive of action will be hatred of the Sassenach, inflamed by the priests." Apprehensions of this kind were not lessened by the memorable speech of Mr. Canning, delivered on the 15th of February, in which he gave a narrative of his labours and sacrifices in the catholic cause, and complained of the exactions and ingratitude of its leaders. Having shown how he stood by the cause in the worst of times, he proceeded:—"Sir, I have always refused to act in obedience to the dictates of the catholic leaders; I would never put myself into their hands, and I never will. . . . Much as I have wished to serve the catholic cause, I have seen that the service of the catholic leaders is no easy service. They are hard taskmasters, and the advocate who would satisfy them must deliver himself up to them, bound hand and foot. . . . But to be taunted with a want of feeling for the catholics, to be accused of compromising their interests, conscious as I am—as I cannot but be—of being entitled to their gratitude for a long course of active services, and for the sacrifice to their cause of interests of my own—this is a sort of treatment which would rouse even tameness itself to assert its honour, and vindicate its claims. I have shown that in the year 1812 I refused office rather than enter into an administration pledged against the catholic question. I did this at a time when office would have been dearer to me than at any other period of my political life; when I would have given ten years of life for two years of office, not for any sordid or selfish purpose of personal aggrandisement, but for far other and higher views. But is this the only sacrifice I have made to the catholic cause? The house will perhaps bear with me a little longer, while I answer this question by another fact. From the earliest dawn of my public life—aye, from the first visions of youthful ambition—that ambition had been directed to one object above all others. Before that object all others vanished into comparative insignificance. It was desirable to me beyond all the blandishments of power, beyond all the rewards and favours of the crown. That object was to represent in this house the university in which I was educated. I had a fair chance of accomplishing this object when the catholic question crossed my way. I was warned, fairly and kindly warned, that my adoption of that cause would blast my prospect. I adhered to the catholic cause, and forfeited all my long-cherished hopes and expectations. And yet I am told that I have made no sacrifice! that I have postponed the cause of the catholics to views and interests of my own! Sir, the representation of the university has fallen into worthier hands. I rejoice with my right honourable friend near me (Mr. Peel) in the high honour which he has obtained. Long may he enjoy the distinction, and long may it prove a source of reciprocal pride to our parent university and to himself! Never till this hour have I stated, either in public or in private, the extent of this irretrievable sacrifice; but I have not felt it the less deeply. It is past, and I shall speak of it no more."

CHAPTER XI.

Dissolution of Parliament—The General Election—The Irish Landlords and the Irish Priests—The Forty Shilling Freeholders—Anti-Catholic Feeling in England—The New Parliament—Bubble Companies and the House of Commons—Illness of the Duke of York—The Expedition to Portugal; Canning's Speech on the Subject—Death of the Duke of York; his Character; Attack upon his Character by Mr. Shell—The Duke's Funeral—The Royal Vault at Windsor—Death and Character of Lord Liverpool—Mr. Canning Prime Minister—Factional Opposition of the Tory Lords; not shared by Peel—Aristocratic Combination against Genius and Personal Merit—The Whig Peers stand by their Order—The Position of Canning; his Health gives way, and he succumbs to Aristocratic Persecution; his Death.

PARLIAMENT was prorogued on the 31st of May, 1826, and two days after dissolved. It had nearly run its course. It was the sixth session, which had been abridged with a view of getting through the general election at a convenient season. But though the session was short, it had a great deal of work to show of one kind or another, including some useful legislation. The parliamentary papers printed occupied twenty-nine folio volumes, exclusive of the journals and votes. The parliament whose existence was now terminated had, indeed, effected the most important changes in the policy of this country, foreign and domestic. Mr. Canning had severed the connection, unnatural as it was damaging, between England and the Holy Alliance. The government of the freest country in the world, presenting almost the only example of a constitution in which the power of the people was represented, was no longer to be associated in the councils of a conclave of despots; and this change of direction in our foreign policy was cordially adopted by the house of commons and by the nation. Another great and vital change in our national policy was the partial admission of the principles of free trade, which the tories regarded, not without reason, as effecting a complete revolution, which extended its influence to the whole of our legislation and government.

In one respect the general election happened at an unseasonable time. It was the driest and warmest summer on record. On the 28th of June, the hottest day in the year, the thermometer stood at eighty-nine and a half degrees in the shade. Several deaths were occasioned by sun-stroke; among the victims were a son of earl Grey and Mr. Butterworth, the eminent law bookseller, a candidate for Dover. The elections were carried on in many places with great spirit. But, though there were exciting contests, the struggles were not for parties, but for measures. There were three great questions at issue before the nation, and with respect to these pledges were exacted. The principal were the corn laws, catholic emancipation, and the slave trade. In England and Wales one hundred and thirty-three members were returned who had never before sat in parliament. This large infusion of new blood showed that the constituencies were in earnest. In Ireland the contests turned chiefly on the catholic question. Wherever the Roman catholics had a majority of votes there was a fierce struggle between the priests and the landlords. The organisation of the Catholic Association told now with tremendous effect. In every parish the populace were so excited by inflammatory harangues, delivered in the chapel on Sundays, after public worship, both by priests and laymen—the altar being converted into a platform—

that irresistible pressure was brought to bear upon the Roman catholic electors. The "forty shilling freeholders" had been multiplied to an enormous extent by the landlords for electioneering purposes. Roman catholic candidates being out of the question, and the tory interest predominant in Ireland, electioneering contests had been hitherto in reality less political than personal. They had been contests for pre-eminence between great rival families; consequently, farms were cut up into small holdings, because a cabin and a potato garden gave a man

the contest that they went almost to a man against their landlords. In many cases they had got their holdings at low rents on the express condition that their vote should be at the disposal of the landlord. But all such obligations were given to the winds. They followed their priests from every parish to the hustings, surrounded and driven forward by a mass of non-electors armed with sticks and shouting for their church and their country. O'Connell was now in his glory, everywhere directing the storm which he had raised. When the contest was over, many



SIR JAMES MACINTOSH.

who was little better than a pauper an interest which he could swear was to him worth forty shillings a-year. The protestant landlords who pursued this selfish course little dreamt that the political power they thus created would be turned, with terrible effect, against themselves; and they could scarcely realise their position when, in county after county, they were driven from the representation, which some of them regarded as an inheritance almost as secure as their estates. The most powerful family in Ireland, and the most influential in the government, was that of the Beresfords, whose principal estates lay in the county Waterford, and where no one would imagine that their candidate could be opposed with the least prospect of success. But on this occasion they suffered a signal defeat. The forty shilling freeholders, as well as the better class of Roman catholic farmers, were so excited by

of the landlords retaliated by evicting the tenants who had betrayed their trust and forfeited their pledges. They were tauntingly told that they might go for the means of living to O'Connell and the priests. This was a new ingredient in the cauldron of popular discontent, disaffection, and agrarian crime. The gain of the catholic party in Ireland, however, was more than counterbalanced by the gain of the opposite party in England and Scotland.

The new parliament met on the 14th of November. Mr. Mannings Sutton was re-elected speaker. A week was spent in the swearing-in of members, and on the 21st the session was opened by the king in person. In the royal speech allusion was made to the throwing open of the ports for the admission of foreign grain, and the distress that had visited the manufacturing districts. The address was carried in the upper house without a division, and in

the lower house an amendment, moved by Mr. Hume, found only twenty-four supporters.

On the 5th of December alderman Waithman moved for a committee of inquiry with reference to the part taken by members of parliament in the joint stock mania of 1824-5-6. He stated that within the last three years six hundred joint stock companies had been formed, most of them for dishonest purposes. The directors of these fraudulent schemes worked with the market as they pleased, forcing up the prices of shares to sell, and depressing them to buy, pocketing the difference. He dwelt particularly on the Arignon Mining Company, of which the late chairman of the committee of ways and means, Mr. Brogden, had been a director. The directors of this company, besides an allowance of three guineas per day for the use of their names, had divided between them a large surplus, arising from traffic in shares. Other members of the house, he alleged, had enriched themselves by bubble companies, particularly Sir William Congreve. At the suggestion of Mr. Canning, the inquiry was restricted to the Arignon Company. A vast amount of loss and suffering had been inflicted by those bubble companies. A check was given to the steady and healthful progress of the country by the fever of excitement, followed by a sudden and terrible collapse. Healthful commerce was blighted, and one of the worst results of the revulsion was, that it not only swept away the delusive projects of adventurers, but paralysed for a season the operations of legitimate enterprise. The commercial atmosphere, however, had been cleared by the monetary crisis of 1825-6. An extensive decomposition of commercial elements was effected. Masses of fictitious property were dispersed, and much of the real capital of the country was distributed in new and safe channels, which caused the year 1827 to open with more cheering prospects.

The duke of York did not long survive his vehement declaration against the concession of the catholic claims. His vow that he would never permit the emancipation to take place, whatever might be his future position—alluding to his probable accession to the throne—greatly embittered the feelings of the Irish Roman catholics against him. His disease was dropsy, and Mr. Sheil, at a public dinner, jeeringly referred to the "rotundity of his configuration." Mr. O'Connell, with equally bad taste, exulted in the prospect of his dissolution, and said, "I wish no physical ill to the royal duke; but if he has thrown his oath in the way of our liberties, and that, as long as he lives, justice shall not be done to the people of Ireland, it is a mockery to tell me that the people of Ireland have not an interest in his ceasing to live. Death is the corrector of human errors; it is said to be man's hour for repentance, and God's opportunity. If the royal duke should not become converted from his political errors, I am perfectly resigned to the will of God, and shall abide the result with the most Christian resignation." The duke's bodily sufferings increased very much towards the end of the year, and in December the disease manifested the most alarming symptoms. He continued to the last to discharge his duties as commander-in-chief. His professional zeal flashed out even on his death-bed. At a time when his breathing was so

oppressed that it was necessary to support him with pillows in an upright position, he personally gave all the orders, and directed all the arrangements, for the expedition which left England in the middle of December, when the peace of Europe was in imminent danger from the threatened invasion of Portugal. Notwithstanding his dislike to Canning, in consequence of their difference on the catholic question, he co-operated with him in this matter with an earnestness and vigour which the duke of Wellington himself could not have surpassed. The occasion for the expedition arose in this way: bands of Portuguese rebels, armed, equipped, and trained in Spain, at the instigation of France, passed the Spanish frontier, carrying terror and devastation into their own country, crossing the boundary at different points, and proclaiming different pretenders to the throne of Portugal. Had Spain employed mercenaries to effect the invasion, there could not be a doubt of its hostile character. Portugal then enjoyed a constitutional government, under the regency of the infant daughter of the king of Brazil. The absolutist party had proclaimed Don Miguel, the king of Brazil's younger brother. During the civil war the rebels had been driven into Spain, where they were welcomed with ardour, equipped afresh, and sent back to maintain the cause of absolutism in the Portuguese dominions. England was bound by treaty to assist Portugal in any such emergency. Her aid was demanded accordingly, and, averse as Mr. Canning was to war, and to intervention in the affairs of foreign states, he rendered the assistance required with the utmost promptitude. On Friday, December 3rd, the Portuguese ambassador made a formal demand of assistance against a hostile aggression from Spain. Canning answered that, though he had heard rumours to that effect, he had not yet received such precise information as justified him in applying to parliament. It was only on Friday that that information arrived. On Saturday the cabinet came to a decision; on Sunday the decision received the sanction of the king; on Monday it was communicated to both houses of parliament, and on Tuesday the troops were on their march for embarkation. The expedition arrived at Lisbon in good time, and had the desired effect of restoring tranquillity and preventing war—that "war of opinions" which Canning so much dreaded. It was on this occasion that Canning delivered the magnificent oration which electrified the house and the country. No speech in parliament had ever before produced such an effect. Only a man of splendid genius and intense sympathy, placed in a position to wield the force of a great nation, could have delivered such a speech, or produced such an effect. "The situation of England," he said, "amidst the struggle of political opinions which agitates more or less sensibly different countries of the world, may be compared to that of the ruler of the winds—

*'Celsa sedet Æolus arce,
Sceptra tenens; mollitque animos et temperat iras
Nisi faciat Maria ac terras columque profundum,
Quippe ferant rapidi secum, verrantque per auras.'*

The consequence of letting loose the passions at present chained and confined would be to produce a scene of desolation which no man can contemplate without horror,

and I would not sleep easy on my couch if I were conscious that I had contributed to accelerate it by a single moment. This is the reason why I dread the recurrence of hostilities in any part of Europe; why I would forbear long on any point which did not taint the national honour, ere I let slip the dogs of war, the leash of which we hold in our hands, not knowing whom they may reach, or how far their ravages may be carried. Such is the love of peace which the British government acknowledges, and such the necessity for peace which the circumstances of the world inculcate. Let us fly to the aid of Portugal, because it is our duty to do so; and let us cease our interference when that duty ends. We go to Portugal not to rule, not to dictate, not to prescribe constitutions, but to defend and preserve the independence of an ally. We go to plant the standard of England on the well-known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted, foreign dominion shall not come."

The house received this speech with tumultuous applause, and refused to listen to the objections that Mr. Hume and others wished to urge against the expedition, on the score of economy. In the upper house also the government was sustained by an overwhelming majority. The expedition, consisting of six thousand men, received orders to march on the 11th of December, and began to land in Lisbon on Christmas Day. The incursions from Spain immediately ceased, and France, which had instigated and secretly encouraged the movement, now found it prudent to disclaim all connection with it. Before eighteen months had elapsed the troops had returned; "and this affair passed over," remarks Sir Archibald Alison, "with no other result but that of rendering Mr. Canning the idol of the liberal party throughout the world, and demonstrating to the astonished nations the elements of war, which, amidst all their pacific interests, slumbered in the breasts of the British people."*

The duke of York grew rapidly worse, and he felt conscious that his end was approaching. On the 28th of December he received the sacrament, along with his sister, the princess Sophia, at the hands of the bishop of London. On the next day he received a parting visit from the king, and on the 5th of January he expired. He was in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and had been at the head of the army for more than thirty-two years. His sincerity and affability, his punctual attention to the discharge of his official duties, and his endeavours to improve the condition of the army in every respect, made him highly popular. During his administration at the Horse Guards, he got the credit of having almost created the British army, and obtained the reputation of being the soldier's friend. The duke was large in person, and manly in his bearing. He strikingly resembled George III. in appearance, and inherited in some degree his rapid mode of speaking. He inherited, also, his father's principles and prejudices; but differed from him widely in his unrestrained love of pleasure, and his addiction to gambling. He was a great favourite with the tory party, to which he more than ever endeared himself by his declaration against catholic eman-

cipation. Early in life he served in the campaign in Flanders, where he acquired the experience which enabled him, as commander-in-chief, to sympathise with the soldier in his hardships and privations. He had, no doubt, many amiable and estimable qualities, which secured the attachment of friends. Generous to a fault, profuse in his liberality, he became deeply involved in debt. The conservative historian touches lightly on his "irregularities of another kind, the frequent accompaniment of exalted rank, and an ardent disposition;" and these, he observes, "were fastened on, during one memorable investigation, by the combined forces of scandal and faction, with such intensity as rendered his temporary retirement from office a matter of necessity. But he was soon restored to it with the unanimous approbation of the nation, which, however frequently overborne, for a time, by the vehemence of party, or the clamour of the press, is rarely in the end unjust in the estimate of private character, or ungrateful for public services."

To liberals and moderate politicians of his own day, his character appeared in a different light. They admitted that he was constant in his friendships; but then his most intimate friends and associates were not persons distinguished in the state, in literature, science, or art. On the contrary, they said, he had to descend very low before he found the moral characters in whom he delighted; and from the meanness of his capacity, or the vulgarity of his tastes, he made worthless persons the sharers in his dissipations and prodigalities. They asserted that in the disposal of his patronage at the Horse Guards he failed to discern or reward merit, and yielded to the seductive influences of his mistresses. What his own party admired as chivalrous devotion to principle, the liberals denounced as the rashness and recklessness of obstinate bigotry, which would dismember the empire rather than yield to the claims of justice. His speech on the catholic question produced an extraordinary sensation. Some were in raptures with it, and declared it was the best any of the Brunswick family ever made. "The duke of York and no popery" was seen, in flaming capitals, placarded on every dead wall, and copies of his speech were issued in large type, from every press in the country. Lord Eldon, in one of his letters, states that for some weeks preceding his death, his anxiety upon the catholic question engrossed the whole of his thoughts. He showed the chancellor a list of persons, which he had submitted to the king, as the proper persons to be continued or to be appointed his ministers, selected chiefly with a view to the catholic question. Lord Eldon expressed his conviction that the duke's existence was essential to counteract the influence of Mr. Canning.* In anticipation of his death, in a letter dated 2nd of January, 1827, he wrote:—"The poor duke of York still exists, contrary to what medical men said, as long ago as Sunday last, could be the case. My account last night from Arlington House intimated that his constitution was still strong, and his existence might endure for some days. His resignation, his composure, the fortitude with which he bears his present state, are very, very great. Now his death is

* Vol. iv., p. 89.

* Twiss's "Life of Eldon," vol. ii., p. 581.

certain, there is a universal gloom, I understand, everywhere in this town, very striking. His death must affect every man's political situation, perhaps nobody's more than my own. It may shorten, it may prolong my stay in office. The *Morning Chronicle* has, I hear, advertised my resignation." Eldon, expressing the feelings of his party, declared the duke's death to be an irreparable loss to the nation. To the Roman catholics of Ireland, on the contrary, it was an inexpressible relief.

The funeral of the duke of York was conducted in great state, all the most distinguished men of the time, statesmen, generals, and divines, attending. It took place on the night of the 20th of January, in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

Toryism had now lost two of its main pillars, the marquises of Londonderry and the duke of York. They had worked together for many years, one directing the foreign policy of the country while sustaining the chief burden of a great war against France, the other at the head of the British army, whose valour ultimately triumphed at Waterloo. A third of those pillars, lord Liverpool, was now struck down; and the fourth, lord Eldon, was not destined to survive very long. On the 17th of February a stroke of paralysis terminated the public life of the prime minister, though he survived till December 4th in the following year. He was born in 1770, and as Mr. Jenkinson and lord Hawkesbury had been strenuous supporters of Mr. Pitt, his premiership commenced June 9th, 1812. He had acquired from his father an extensive knowledge of monetary and commercial affairs, and this, combined with the experience of a protracted official career, gave him a great advantage in parliament, making him master of the leading principles and facts. Amiable, exemplary, frank, and disinterested in his private character, he secured the attachment of his friends, and conciliated the good will of his political opponents. He was not distinguished for superior statesmanship, power in debate, or originality of mind; but as a political leader he was what is called a safe man—cautious, moderate, plausible, and conciliatory. His cabinet was weakened by division, the most agitating topic of the day being an open question with its members—Eldon, Wellington, and Peel voting with him on one side, Canning and his friends on the other. His practical wisdom was shown in so far yielding to the spirit of the times as to admit Mr. Canning into the cabinet on the death of lord Londonderry, though he found great difficulty in overcoming the repugnance of the king to this arrangement. In the same spirit he had admitted the Grenvilles to a responsible share in the administration. Had he been a man of more decision of character, and more energetic will, he would have been more one-sided and straightforward, and that would not have suited a time of great transition and changes of political currents. During his long tenure of office new ideas were fermenting in the public mind. The people had become impatient of class legislation, and were loudly demanding greater influence in the legislation of the country, greater security for their rights, and freer scope for their industry. They had the most powerful advocates in the press and in parliament, where Henry Brougham stood foremost among

their champions, incessantly battling for their cause. The conservatives were entrenched behind the bulwarks of monopoly, which were assailed with a frequency and determination that, it was foreseen by the wisest of their defenders, nothing could ultimately resist. Lord Liverpool, with great tact and prudence, managed to postpone the hour of surrender so long as he was in command of the fortress. He had yielded one outwork after another, when resistance was no longer possible, but the value of his services in retaining the rest was not fully appreciated till he was disabled and placed *hors de combat*. Without any far-reaching sagacity, he could estimate the relative value of existing social and political forces, and, weighing all the circumstances, determine what was the best thing to be done, the best of several courses to adopt here and now. He felt that catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform might be still safely resisted, and here he was loyal to his party; but on questions of currency, free trade, and navigation, he went readily with his liberal supporters.

When he was removed, it was evident that the temporising system would do no longer. The head of the cabinet must take one side or the other. The prime minister must be a friend or an enemy of progress—a reformer or an anti-reformer. Under these circumstances, the king had great difficulty in forming an administration. The prostration of lord Liverpool had come upon the political world "with the force of an earthquake," convulsing parties in the most violent and singular manner, and completely changing the aspect of affairs at court and in the state. The sovereign had before him, on one hand, Mr. Canning, the leader of the house of commons, the most popular minister, the most brilliant statesman in England since the days of Pitt. How could he put aside his claims to be prime minister? On the tory side there was no statesman to whom the post could be safely entrusted. If lord Eldon could be kept in his place as chancellor, it was as much as could be expected at his time of life. The duke of Wellington's military character, as well as his anti-catholic feeling, prevented his being placed at the head of an administration. Mr. Peel was considered too young to occupy so great a position. The latter was consulted, and gave it as his opinion that an anti-catholic ministry could not be formed. The issue was, that, after a fortnight's anxious suspense and difficulty, the king entrusted Mr. Canning with the formation of a ministry. The task which he undertook was extremely delicate and difficult. He was greatly disliked by the chiefs of both parties. He belonged to no old aristocratic house. He had risen to the first position in the state by his genius and industry, by the wise and beneficent application of the most brilliant and commanding talents. These excited intense jealousy among those whose principal merit consisted in hereditary rank. When he had received the king's orders, though aware of their feelings towards him, he dealt with them in a frank and generous spirit. He wrote to his colleagues individually, courteously expressing his desire that the public service might still enjoy the advantages to be derived from the exercise of their administrative talents. Most of them answered evasively, pretending that they did not know who was to be prime minister, and

postponing their decision till they had received that information. As soon as they learned that they were to serve under Mr. Canning, the entire administration, with very few exceptions, resigned. Mr. Peel did not share the antipathies of his aristocratic colleagues. Mr. Canning declared that he was the only seceding member of the government that behaved well to him at this time; and so high was his opinion of that gentleman, that he considered him to be his only rightful political heir and successor. He was not deceived on either of those points. Mr. Peel, writing confidentially to Lord Eldon, on the 9th of April, expressed his feelings frankly, and they did him honour. His earnest wish was to see the government retained on the footing on which it stood at the time of lord Liverpool's misfortune. He was content with his own position as home secretary. Though differing from every one of his colleagues in the house of commons on the catholic question, he esteemed and respected them, and would consider it a great misfortune were his majesty to lose the services of any of them, "but particularly of Canning." In reference to a remark of the king, that he would feel a difficulty in serving under Canning as prime minister, he wrote thus to the chancellor:—"As his majesty has mentioned this to you, I may, in writing to you, now break that silence which I have hitherto maintained on a subject of so much delicacy. The difficulty to which his majesty referred arises out of the catholic question, and I must say out of that alone. If I agreed with Canning on that question, or if his opinions had been the same with lord Liverpool's, I should not have hesitated to remain in office." He then refers to his own peculiar position with regard to the catholic claims. He had always opposed those claims, and he was mainly responsible for the administration of affairs in Ireland. He asks, therefore, "Can I see the influence of the office of prime minister transferred from lord Liverpool to Canning, and added to that of leader of the house of commons, without subjecting myself to misconstruction with respect to my views on the catholic question? Can it be so transferred without affecting my particular situation as secretary for the home department, and my weight and efficiency in the administration of Irish affairs? It is with deep and unaffected regret that I answer these questions in the negative." He was willing to retire alone, if the rest of his colleagues, who did not feel the same difficulty, would consent to hold office with Canning. He advised the king that an exclusive protestant government could not be formed. He also said that he was out of the question as the head of a government, under the arrangement that he considered the best that could be made, namely, the re-construction of the late administration, "because it was quite impossible for Canning to acquiesce in his appointment." He was, however, ready to give Canning's government his general support.

On the 10th of April, when Mr. Canning kissed hands as first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, he found himself deserted by the duke of Wellington, lord Eldon, Mr. Peel, lords Bathurst, Melville, and Westmoreland. The only members of the cabinet who finally adhered to him were lord Harrowby, Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Wynne, and Mr. Robinson, now lord

Goderich, who had become secretary of the colonial department, with the lead of the government in the house of lords. Having received the resignations, and presented them to the king, Mr. Canning said:—"Here, sire, is that which disables me from executing the orders I have received from you respecting the formation of a new administration. It is now open to your majesty to adopt a new course; for no step has yet been taken in the execution of those orders that is irrecoverable." He added, that if he was to go on, his writ must be moved for that day, which was the last before the Easter recess. The king at once gave him his hand to kiss, and confirmed the appointment. Two hours after, the house was ringing with acclamations, while Mr. Wynne was moving that a new writ be issued for the borough of Newport, in consequence of the right honourable George Canning having accepted the office of first lord of the treasury. This was a result which lord Eldon did not anticipate. He evidently expected that Canning would be foiled in his attempt to form a ministry. He wrote, "Who could have thought it? I guess that I, Wellington, Peel, Bathurst, Westmoreland, and C. will be out." Again he says, "The whole conversation in town is made up of abusive, bitterly abusive, talk of people about each other—all fire and flame. I have known nothing like it." Elsewhere he remarks, "I think political enmity runs higher and waxes warmer than I ever knew it."*

The irritation arose from the fact that the force of public opinion was wresting political power from the families that had so long held it in well-secured possession as their hereditary right. Mr. Canning appeared before them as the man in whom that opinion had triumphed—who, by his own talents and merit alone, had risen to the first position in the state, to be, in fact, the chief ruler, the acting sovereign of the empire. Hence the mortification, hence the factious wrath that was poured upon his devoted head. They succeeded in victimising a statesman of whom, as Englishmen, they ought to have been proud, vainly hoping that they could thereby maintain the domination of their order in the government of the country. They were aware that the state of Mr. Canning's health was not good. He had all the exquisite sensibility, as well as the pride of genius. His finely-strung nervous system had been overwrought by incessant labour and anxiety, and irritated by the unworthy and unmerited attacks to which he had been subjected. He suppressed his feelings with a manly self-control, and a noble disdain of the factious and virulent assaults upon him. But he felt keenly, nevertheless, and the more carefully he hid the wounds of his mind, the more fatally the poisoned shafts rankled within. We may judge how ill-prepared he was to bear the "strike" of seven cabinet ministers, from what he had suffered a short time before from the debate on his measure for the mitigation of the corn law grievance. The day after the debate he wrote to Sir William Knighton in the following terms:—

"MY DEAR SIR.—The only ill effect of my attendance in the house of commons on Thursday was a sleepless

*"Life of Eldon," vol. II., pp. 588, 604.



CANNING RECEIVING HIS APPOINTMENT AS PRIME MINISTER.

night, a grievance which I do not remember to have experienced to the same degree before. I was not feverish; I was not exhausted; I was not even tired; and I can generally get to sleep, putting aside whatever is upon my mind; but Thursday night I could not. *I felt as if every limb, from top to toe, was alive like an eel*; and I lay all night, not tossing and tumbling, but as broad awake as if it were mid-day. The consequence was, that I kept quiet at home (by Holland's advice) all yesterday, and did not go to the house of commons, for which reason I have not written to his majesty; perhaps you will have the kindness to explain why. I am quite well this morning,

by Mr. Sturges Bourne, who retired after a few weeks to make way for the marquis of Lansdowne. The duke of Clarence succeeded lord Melville as first lord of the admiralty, and the marquis of Anglesea the duke of Wellington as master general of the ordnance. Viscount Palmerston was the new secretary at war, so that it is now thirty-five years since our present popular and vigorous premier became a cabinet minister. The new master of the rolls was Sir John Leech, the attorney-general Sir James Scarlett, and the solicitor-general Sir N. Tindal. Mr. Lamb, afterwards lord Melbourne, succeeded Mr. Goulburn as chief secretary of Ireland.*



THE BATTLE OF NAVARINO.

having (by order) dined more liberally yesterday, and drank a little more wine, and afterwards slept like a top from eleven to seven.—Ever most sincerely yours, GEORGE CANNING.*

The new premier, however, was resolute, and persevered with his arrangements. He found an excellent successor to lord Eldon, as chancellor, in Sir John Copley, the master of the rolls, who was created lord Lyndhurst, and who still survives among us, the venerable Nestor of the house of peers. Mr. Peel, as home secretary, was succeeded

These three events—the death of the duke of York, the appointment of Mr. Canning as prime minister, and the entire remodelling of the cabinet on liberal principles—succeeding one another so rapidly in the early months of 1827, were regarded as the turning points in the modern history of England, and fraught with vast consequences in future times. The first changed the heir apparent to the throne, and for an obstinate bigot substituted a prince of popular sympathies. The second represented the triumph of intellect and public opinion over rank and monopoly.

* "Memoirs of Sir W. Knighton," vol. i., p. 376.

* "Annual Register," 1827, p. 105.

"Changes so vast," writes Sir Archibald Alison, "could not fail to exercise a powerful influence on the course of events in future times. The magnitude of the change appeared in the most decided manner, when the ministerial explanations usual in such cases took place in parliament. Both houses were crowded to excess, both in the highest degree excited, but the excitement in the two was as different as the poles are asunder: in the commons it was the triumph of victory, in the peers the consternation of defeat. So clearly was this evinced, that it obliterated for a time the deep lines of party distinction, and brought the two houses, almost as hostile bodies united under different standards, into the presence of each other. The commons rang with acclamations when the new premier made his triumphant explanation from the head of the ministerial bench; but they were still louder when Mr. Peel, from the cross benches, out of office, said, "They may call me illiberal and tory, but it will be found that some of the most necessary measures of useful legislation of late years are inscribed with my name." The tide of reform had become so strong that even the avowed tory leaders in the lower house were fain to take credit by sailing along with it. In the house of lords, on the other hand, the feeling of the majority was decidedly hostile to the new administration, and that not merely on the tory benches, where it might naturally have been looked for, but among the old whig nobility, who had long considered government as an appendage of their estates. It was hard to say whether the old peers on both sides responded more strongly to the duke of Wellington and lord Eldon's explanation of their reasons for declining to hold office, or to earl Grey's powerful and impassioned attack on the new premier. The division of the two houses was clearly pronounced; the one presaged its approaching triumph, the other its coming downfall. The secret sense of coming change had raised their numbers in unwonted combinations, and the vital distinction of interest and order had for the time superseded the old divisions of party.*"

Mr. Canning had now attained the highest summit to which the ambition of a British subject can aspire. With the acclamation of the country and of the house of commons, he had taken the first place in the government of the empire, to which he had raised himself by his talents and his merit alone, surmounting as he rose the most formidable impediments, aristocratic antipathies, class interests, and royal dislike. He was the idol of the nation, and not only in Great Britain, but throughout the world, his fame shone brightest of all the public men of his age. His name was associated with the triumph of liberal principles throughout Europe and America; he was at the head of a strong government, and he had conciliated the good will of his sovereign. Such a combination of what are usually regarded as the elements of human happiness has rarely, if ever, been known in the history of England, where almost such a phenomenon could occur. As a man of genius, as an orator, as a political leader, he enjoyed a reputation and a degree of success which in any one of these capacities would be regarded by

the majority of men as the acme of human felicity. But in addition to these he enjoyed a position and wielded a power with which many great men have been content, without the brilliant halo of glory with which, in Canning's case, they were surrounded. But it is a singular and humbling illustration of the vanity of human wishes and human glory, that this great man was, after all, unhappy, and that the political enemies he had vanquished had the power of bringing him to an early grave. The whig and tory lords studied in every way to wound the proud spirit, which they knew to be extremely sensitive. They scowled upon him, with looks of resentment and vengeance. Old friends averted their eyes from the affectionate companion of earlier days; the cordial pressure of his hand was not returned; his associates and supporters in office and in parliament were, for the most part, his former opponents in many a political battle-field. The odium of being a convert to liberal principles settled upon his noble spirit like a fatal blight, the animosity with which intolerance pursues the honest and generous lover of truth and right pierced his susceptible nervous system like a keen, pitiless, persistent east wind. This was more than his delicate organism could long bear. The state of his mind affected his bodily health. The charm of his conversation made him the delight of his friends in private society, in which he found a solace, and a welcome relaxation from the toils of office. It was natural, though to be regretted, that with such a susceptible, enjoying, and genial temperament, delighting in wit and humour, and diffusing pleasure around him by the coruscations of his own genius, he should have lingered longer in convivial parties than was prudent for his health. The consequence was, an inflamed and irritable state of the system. Thus predisposed to disease, he caught cold by sitting under a tree, after being heated with walking, while on a visit with lord Lyndhurst at Wimbledon. Attacked with inflammation of the kidneys, he went to Chiswick, on the recommendation of his medical advisers, and there, after a brief period of intense suffering, he died in the villa of the duke of Devonshire, and in the same room in which a man of kindred genius, the illustrious Charles James Fox, breathed his last.

Mr. Canning was born in the parish of Marylebone, of parents who were unable to give him anything but a superior education, which he obtained at Eton, where he was distinguished by his talents, his taste for literary composition, and his assiduity in his studies. It was there he formed the friendship with young Jenkinson, afterwards lord Liverpool, to which he owed his first introduction to the cabinet. He was also acquainted with Sheridan, through whom he had much intercourse with the whigs, which partly accounts for the liberal tendencies of his mind. In 1793 he entered the house of commons as member for Newport, a government borough. In 1799 he married a daughter of general Scott, with a fortune of £100,000. He rendered effective support to Pitt during the war, both by his brilliant speeches in parliament, and his vigorous writing in the "Anti-Jacobin." He had much wit, and a great command of the weapons of ridicule and invective. He had once a quarrel with lord Castlereagh, with whom he fought a duel, but they were reconciled, and Mr. Can-

* "History of Europe," vol. iv., p. 101.

ning subsequently accepted a subordinate office under that minister. He had damaged his political reputation by his apparent truckling for office, strenuous support of the Six Acts, and his contemptuous treatment of the question of parliamentary reform; but he redeemed his character by the manly part he took in refusing to participate in the proceedings against queen Caroline, in consequence of which he resigned his office, though his colleagues would have allowed him to be neutral on the subject. He was about, as we have seen, to embark for India as governor-general, when the death of lord Londonderry placed the secretaryship of foreign affairs at his disposal; and the illness of lord Liverpool following soon after, enabled him to seize the prize of the premiership. He had represented Liverpool for many years, and that city was so proud of him that no other candidate, however popular, could succeed in depriving him of his seat, though the attempt was four times made. He was considered vain and arrogant by his colleagues in office, some of whom regarded him with ill-suppressed feelings of envy and dislike. Among the faults of his political career were his opposition to parliamentary reform and his indiscreet declaration against the dissenters. He had not the solidity and weight necessary to be the successful leader of a party. There was more of brilliancy than power in his intellect. He united in an eminent degree, with high political ability, the accomplishments of scholarship, the graces of a manly bearing, elegant manners, personal advantages, an affectionate disposition, a forgiving temper, and a conciliatory address. His eloquence was not of the deep, strong, impetuous order, like that of Fox, nor profoundly philosophical, rich in thought, and gorgeous in illustration, like Burke's; but it was correct, copious, classically ornate, singularly felicitous in diction, charming by its beauties of style and by the amusing display of ridicule and humour. His conceptions were sometimes peculiarly grand and beautiful, but they were more the play of a fine fancy than the inventions of an original genius. He was an accomplished rhetorician rather than a vigorous reasoner; deficient in creative power, but abounding in the gifts which embellish and adorn. He died in the fifty-seventh year of his age, on the 8th of August, 1827. He requested that his funeral might be private, but his hearse was followed to Westminster Abbey by a large concourse of the nobility and gentry of all parties, as well as an immense crowd of people, anxious to testify their respect to the memory of one of England's most illustrious statesmen.* The grief for his death was not confined to his own countrymen. Wherever men had struggled successfully for freedom, wherever nations had won their independence, or still groaned under the yoke of despotism, wherever the Holy Alliance was hated and feared, wherever philanthropists sighed for the time when the intercourse of nations would be unrestricted by navigation laws, and the progress of society would be unobstructed by class interests and monopolies, the death of Canning was deplored as a great calamity, not for England only, but for the civilised world.

CHAPTER XII.

The Goderich Administration; its Dissolution—The Wellington Ministry—Creation of Peers—Canning's Widow a Viscountess—The Grenville Party—Eldon Discarded; his bitter Mortification—The Battle of Navarino—Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge—Brougham—"The Schoolmaster Abroad"—Mr. Huskisson—East Retford and Penryn—Retirement of the Canningites from the Ministry—Wellington's Mental Reservation—The Nonconformists—The Act of Uniformity—The Penal Code against Dissenters—Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts; Peel's Objections; The Government adopt the Measure—Opposition in the Lords—Lord Eldon's frantic Denunciations of the Government and the Bishops—The Declaration substituted for the Sacramental Test; Commemoration of the Triumph.

THE ministerial changes consequent on the death of Mr. Canning were announced on the 17th of August. Viscount Goderich, afterwards earl of Ripon, became the first lord of the treasury, the duke of Portland president of the council, Mr. Herries chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Huskisson colonial secretary, and Mr. C. Grant president of the board of trade. On the 22nd the duke of Wellington was gazetted as commander-in-chief. He accepted this office at the earnest request of the king, and it was universally felt that he was the fittest man for the post; but those who, with lord Eldon, earnestly wished for the speedy downfall of the new ministry—which they regarded as almost exclusively Canningite—lamented that he should have assumed that position which would necessarily paralyse his opposition in the house of lords, and so far tend to keep in the administration. There was, however, little chance of that, for perhaps no cabinet was ever more divided. They intrigued man against man, section against section; and at last, without any external pressure, the cabinet fell to pieces from its own weakness. Lord Goderich lost heart, and gave in his resignation before parliament met. The king was at Windsor while the work of dissolution was going on. When it was complete, he said, "If they had not dissolved themselves by their own acts, I should have remained faithful to them to the last." They appeared before him on the 8th of January, to resign the offices which they had received from his hands. The duke of Wellington was then sent for. It was not his wish, we are assured by his biographer, to become prime minister of England. The reasons which had impelled him, on a former occasion, to resist the solicitations of his colleagues induced him now to remonstrate respectfully with the sovereign; but the king would take no denial. "He pointed out that except the duke himself there was no public man—none, at least, whom he (the sovereign) could trust—sufficiently influential, amid the complications and difficulties of the times, to form a strong government, and implored him to waive whatever personal scruples he might entertain, and to take upon himself the responsibilities of office. Such an appeal went to the very core of the principle on which the whole tenor of the duke's public life had been founded. His sovereign required his services, and it was not for him to oppose his own inclinations. He accepted the trust, returned to town next day, and entered into immediate communication with Mr. Peel.*"

Lord Goderich, on this occasion, acted with great

* "Life of Canning," pp. 350—369.

* Gleig's "Life of Wellington," p. 424.

humility. In a letter to the duke of Buckingham, shortly after his resignation, he expressed his willingness to serve under the duke, though it might certainly be a matter of doubt with him how far, under existing circumstances, he could with credit accept office. But as the government was to rest upon a broad basis, and was not to oppose the principles he had always advocated, he was ready to consider favourably any offer that might be made to him. The task which the duke undertook was certainly a most difficult one, considering the nature of the questions that agitated the public mind, and the course which he had adopted in reference to them. The new government was announced on the 25th of January. It retained several members of the Goderich ministry—namely, lord Dudley, Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. Herries. The duke of Wellington was premier, Mr. Goulburn chancellor of the exchequer, lord Aberdeen chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, and lord Ellenborough privy seal. On this occasion several peers were created. Sir Henry Wellesley, who has so long occupied the post of ambassador in France, became baron Cowley, Sir Charles Stuart lord Stuart de Rothesay, Sir William A'Court baron Heytesbury, Mr. Lambton lord Durham, Mr. Wilbraham lord Skelmersdale, and Mr. Wallace baron Wallace. At the same time, Mr. Canning's widow was created a viscountess, with a grant of £6,000 a-year, to be enjoyed after her death by her eldest son, and, in case of his death, by her second son. The former was in the navy, and perished accidentally soon after his father's death. The second son, to whom the family honours descended, was the governor-general of India during the most memorable crisis in the history of that empire. The grant was opposed by lord Althorp, Mr. Hume, and Mr. Banks, but was carried by a majority of 161 to 54. The debate is memorable for the tributes paid to the merits of the deceased. Among these the most remarkable was the speech of Sir J. Macintosh, who said:—"That he was a man of the purest honour, I know; that he was a man of the most rare and splendid talents, I know; that he was a man renowned through Europe for his brilliant genius and philosophic thinking, not a member of this house can be ignorant; or that, with his best zeal, as well as with success, he applied that genius and those views of policy to advance the service and glory of his country. A friendship of thirty-six years has given me, and I am not ashamed to confess it, a deep interest in any measure which is intended to do honour to his memory." The Grenville party were completely disregarded in the new arrangements, the duke never having cast a look towards them. Mr. Wynne left the board of control. Dr. Philimore, also, went out at the same time. On the 27th of February the marquis of Anglesea was gazetted as lord lieutenant of Ireland.

Of all the expectants of office in the Wellington administration, the most bitterly disappointed was the ex-chancellor, lord Eldon, to whom official life had from long habit become almost a necessity. He had enjoyed power long enough in reason to admit of his retirement with a contented mind; but the passion for it was never stronger than at the present moment. He was in raptures at the attacks made upon Canning by the duke of Wellington and

lord Grey, and he had laboured most diligently to effect the downfall of that minister. But still he was doomed to solitude in his retreat at Encomb, the hall of which was no longer crowded by king's messengers carrying cabinet boxes, by breathless applicants for injunctions and commissions of bankruptcy, by royal visitors to concert measures for protestant ascendancy, nor by parsons with twelve children coming in quest of livings.* The death of Mr. Canning afforded his spirit immense relief, and he expected every moment an express from the king in his new emergency, his brain being meanwhile busy in the construction of a cabinet, comparing, arranging, and fitting in. The announcement that lord Goderich was to be the new premier was a great disappointment; but he was comforted by the assurance that it could not possibly last long, and disgusted with the duke of Wellington for giving it a chance by accepting the office of commander-in-chief. He hastened to London a few days after Christmas, on account of rumours of a dissolution of the cabinet. Having so often done this when there was a talk of a ministerial crisis, he was called the "stormy petrel." Believing that he had mainly contributed to bring about the ministerial catastrophe, he was dreadfully mortified when he saw in the newspapers the list of the new ministers beginning thus: "Chancellor, lord Lyndhurst." He had not set his heart this time on the office of lord-chancellor, he would have been content with the presidentship of the council or privy seal; but his name was not found in the list at all, nor had he been consulted in any way, or informed about what was going forward during the fortnight that passed before the ministerial arrangements were completed. This utter neglect of his claims excited his anger and indignation to the utmost, and caused him to indulge in bitter revilings and threats against the new cabinet. The great tory lords shared in his resentment, and felt that they were all insulted in his person. Referring to the ministerial arrangements, he wrote:—"You will observe, Dudley, Huskisson, Grant, Palmerston, and Lyndhurst (five) were all *Canningites*, with whom the rest were three weeks ago in most violent contest and opposition; these things are to me quite marvellous. How they are all to deal with each other's conduct, as to the late treaty with Turkey and the Navarino battle, is impossible to conjecture. As the first-fruits of this arrangement, the corporation of London have agreed to petition parliament to repeal the laws which affect dissenters."

Mr. Peel endeavoured to soothe his perturbed spirit by a kind and conciliatory letter, and the duke of Wellington paid him a visit for the same purpose. But he was not quite satisfied with the duke's candour in those transactions. A fortnight before, his grace had called upon him, stating the difficulties of his position, from the various conflicting claimants to office, and the ex-chancellor, being sure that he could not be mistaken in what this was to lead to, anticipating the coming mention of the chancellorship, desired that he might not be considered as a conflicting claimant for "that office." Thus they parted, "and from the moment of his quitting me," says lord Eldon, "to the

* Lord Campbell's "Life of Eldon," p. 475.

appearance in the papers of all the appointments, I never saw his grace. I had no communication with him, either personally, by note, letter, by message through any other person, or in any manner whatever, and for the whole fortnight I heard no more of the matter than you did at Corfe." His old friends and colleagues passed daily by his residence on their way to Apsley House, but so insignificant did he seem to them now, that not one of them thought it worth while to give him a call; and, to crown their ingratitude, they added insult to injury by industriously circulating that he had refused to accept any office on account of his great age. "It is not," he said, "because office was not offered to me that I complain, it is because those with whom I had so long acted and served did not candidly and unreservedly explain themselves and their difficulties to me; and they were not mine adversaries that did me this dishonour, but mine own familiar friends, with whom I had for so many years taken sweet counsel together." He considered himself ill-used, not only by his old colleagues, but in the highest quarter. "I must admit," says lord Campbell, "that he considerably overrated his services there. For he really seems to have thought that George IV. was obliged for his crown to lord Eldon, instead of lord Eldon being obliged for the great seal to George IV."* Having been so shabbily treated by those from whom he had so much reason to expect better things, he felt himself fully at liberty to oppose their measures; and occasion soon arose for venting his spleen, as well as indulging his bigotry.

The Greeks had been struggling to emancipate themselves from the tyrannical dominion of the Turks, aided in their war of independence only by the voluntary contributions and personal services of enthusiastic friends of freedom, like lord Byron. At length, however, the sanguinary nature of the contest, and the injury to commerce by piracy, induced the great powers of Europe to interfere, in order to put an end to the war. Accordingly, on the 6th of July, 1827, a treaty was signed in London by the ministers of Great Britain, France, and Russia, for the pacification of Greece. In pursuance of this treaty, a joint expedition, consisting of English, French, and Russian ships, entered the Bay of Navarino on the 20th of October, with the object of compelling the sultan to concede an armistice, in order that there might be time for effecting an arrangement. The sultan, Mahmoud, having declined the mediation of the combined powers, and Ibrahim Pasha having received a large reinforcement of troops from Egypt, he was ordered to put down the insurrection at every cost by land and sea. He had accordingly recommenced the war with fanatical fury. All Greeks found in arms were to be put to the sword, and the Morea was to be laid waste. The combined fleet of the allies had received orders to demand an armistice, and if this were refused by the Turkish admiral, his fleet was to be destroyed or captured. They found it ranged at the bottom of the bay, in the form of a crescent. Instead of parleying, the Turks began to fire, and the battle commenced apparently without plan on either side. It soon became general. Admiral

Codrington, in the *Asia*, opened a broadside upon the Egyptian admiral, and soon reduced his ship to a wreck; others in rapid succession shared the same fate. The conflict lasted with great fury for four hours. When the smoke cleared off, the enemy had disappeared, and the bay was strewed with the fragments of their ships. Among the allies, the loss of the English was greatest, though not large—only 75 men killed and 197 wounded. The catastrophe produced immense excitement at Constantinople, and had the janissaries (those fierce and bigoted defenders of Mohammedanism whom the sultan had so recently extirpated) been still in existence, it would have fared ill with Christians in that part of the world. The sultan demanded satisfaction, which would not be granted, and the European ambassadors left Constantinople. The battle of Navarino occurred at the time when the duke of Wellington assumed the reins of office, our ambassador having then returned from Constantinople.

The last day but one of the year 1827 was rendered memorable by the establishment of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, consisting chiefly of eminent public characters and men distinguished by their literary and scientific attainments. The object of the society was the imparting useful information to all classes of the community, particularly to such as are unable to avail themselves of experienced teachers, or may prefer learning by themselves. This object was to be attained by periodical publications, under the superintendence of a committee. The society was inaugurated by an able and comprehensive discourse by Mr. Henry Brougham, upon "The Objects, Advantages, and Pleasures of Science." The society fully answered the expectations of its founders, and contributed materially to the promotion of popular education and the diffusion of useful knowledge.

Parliament was opened by commission on the 29th of January, four days after the formation of the Wellington ministry. The royal speech referred chiefly to the affairs of the east, to the rights of neutral nations violated by the revolting excesses of the Greeks and Turks, to the battle of Navarino with the fleet of an ancient ally, which was lamented as an "untoward event;" but hopes were expressed that it might not lead to further hostilities. The speech alluded to the increase of exports and the more general employment of the people as indications of returning prosperity. The phrase "untoward" was objected to by lords Lansdowne and Goderich. Lord Holland denied that our relations with Turkey were those of an alliance; but the duke of Wellington contended that the Ottoman empire was an ancient ally of Great Britain, that it formed an essential part of the balance of power, and that the maintenance of its independent existence was more than ever necessary as an object of European policy.

The duke of Wellington had some difficulty in producing due subordination among the members of his government at the outset. At Liverpool, Mr. Huskisson, in addressing his constituents, by way of apology for serving under a tory chief, said that in taking office he had obtained guarantees for the future liberal course of the government. The duke resented this assertion, and in the house of lords, on the 11th of February, with some warmth, contradicted

* "Life of Lord Eldon," p. 495.

the statement, and declared that pledges had neither been asked nor given, and that if they had been asked, they would have been indignantly refused. Mr. Huskisson explained, in the commons, that by guarantees he had meant only that the past conduct and character of his colleagues furnished pledges for the future course of the ministry. Another cause of misunderstanding arose, on the 19th of the same month, with reference to the disfranchisement of East Retford. A bill had been brought in for that purpose. A portion of the cabinet were for the enlargement of the constituency, by taking in the neighbouring hundred of Brassetlaw; but the constituency had obtained permission to be heard by counsel before the lords, and they produced such an impression that the duke of Wellington hesitated about the propriety of the measure. Another party were for transferring the members to Birmingham. The course Mr. Huskisson is represented to have taken on this question seems so tortuous that it is not easy to account for it. The duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel were understood to have advocated in the cabinet the disfranchisement of East Retford, and the transference of its members to Birmingham. Mr. Huskisson, conceiving that he was in honour bound to adhere to an arrangement that Mr. Canning had made, voted for throwing open the franchise, and carried his point. They produced their bill accordingly, and were met, as in the kindred case of Penryn, with a counter-proposal for transferring the members to Birmingham. Against this Mr. Huskisson argued, as tending to weaken too much and too suddenly the agricultural interest. The second reading was proposed on the 19th of May, and an animated debate ensued, in which the chief speakers on the ministerial side were Mr. Peel and Mr. Huskisson. Nobody appeared to suspect that Mr. Huskisson did not intend to support with his vote the measure which as a speaker he had recommended. "Such, however, proved to be the fact. A division took place, and Mr. Huskisson and lord Palmerston, very much to the astonishment of all parties, went into the lobby against the ministerial proposal.*" At two o'clock that night Mr. Huskisson wrote a letter to the duke, which his grace received at ten in the morning, in which he said, "I owe it to you, as the head of the administration, and to Mr. Peel, as leader of the house of commons, to lose no time in affording you an opportunity of placing my office in other hands." The duke very naturally took this as a resignation, but Mr. Huskisson denied that it was so meant. An irritating correspondence ensued, and Mr. Huskisson left the cabinet, as he affirmed, against his will. He must have had substantial grounds for retiring, for all the followers of Mr. Canning went with him—namely, lord Dudley from the foreign office, lord Palmerston from the war office, and Mr. C. Grant from the board of control. They were succeeded by lord Aberdeen as foreign secretary, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald at the board of control, and Sir Henry Hardinge as secretary at war. Such was the constitution of the government, with all its liberalism thus expurgated, which repealed the Test and Corporation Acts, and carried catholic emancipation. The king was particularly anxious to have a strong

government. He was still firm in his resistance to catholic emancipation. The very mention of the subject by his ministers produced a degree of excitement and irritation which made their intercourse with him occasionally unpleasant. The duke of Wellington seemed, of all men, the least likely to give way on the subject. In the debate on the Test and Corporation Acts, he said, "There is no person in this house whose feelings and sentiments, after long consideration, are more decided than mine are with respect to the Roman catholic claims; and I must say that, until I see a great change in that question, I must oppose it." Mr. Gleig considers that we have here the nearest approach to mental reservation which can anywhere be found "throughout the duke's voluminous sayings and doings." Whatever thoughts may have been passing in his mind, whatever may have been his secret misgivings or purposes, the fact remains that the duke's declaration had the effect which it was probably intended to have. "It satisfied the house of lords that from him, at least, there was nothing to be dreaded in the shape of concession to the Roman catholics."*

On the 28th of February lord John Russell proposed and carried a resolution that the house of commons should go into committee to inquire into the operation of the Test and Corporation Acts, with a view to their repeal. From the very foundation of the established church at the Reformation, the most stringent measures were adopted to put down nonconformity, to render the church and state identical in their constituent elements, and to preserve the uniformity and secure the perpetuity of the faith which had been established. The dissenters, however, maintained what, considering the nature of the human mind, and the laws which regulate opinion, was to be expected—that the Act of Uniformity had utterly failed to accomplish its object. They observed that at first the reformed church was Calvinistic in its articles, its clergy, and its preaching; that it then became Arminian and overcharged with ceremony under Laud; that it was latitudinarian in the days of William and Anne; that in more modern times it has been divided into "high church," and "low church," and "broad church;" that subscription did not prevent the greatest variety and even the most positive contrariety of doctrine and religious opinion, referring, for illustration, to the rise and progress of the "evangelical" and the "Anglican" parties. They further contended that the act had failed in one of its main objects—namely, in keeping all protestants within the pale of the church, as, so far as actual membership or communicants were concerned, the adherents to the establishment were now in a minority. In vain, then, were 2,000 clergymen ejected from their parishes, followed by 60,000 earnest protestants, who, by fines, imprisonment, or voluntary exile, suffered on account of their nonconformity. This persecution had an effect the opposite of what had been anticipated. If, as Hume remarked, every martyrdom in the Marian persecution was worth to protestantism and liberty a hundred sermons against popery, so every act of persecution against the nonconformists was of value to the religious life of the nation. In consequence of the development of that life, the Toleration Act became a necessity; and

* Gleig's "Life of Wellington."

* Life, p. 431.

within twenty years after the passing of that act there were upwards of a thousand nonconforming congregations in the land, and there now exist outside of the communion of the national church a large body of worshippers independent of, but not necessarily hostile to that church, and constituting an important part of the forces and agencies by which Christian civilisation is advanced at home and abroad.

It was shown in an article in a magazine connected with the congregational body, that in 1812 the number of ministers and congregations in the three denominations

£22,100 more than the established church, though they had to educate and maintain their own ministers, and to build their own places of worship by voluntary contributions.

The committee of the deputies of the protestant dissenters, in their report of proceedings for the year 1828, state that the spirit of opposition to the claims of the dissenters throughout the United Kingdom, whether among the clergy or the laity, had been nearly extinct. After one division in the commons, which may be supposed to have been intended by ministers rather to ascertain the feeling



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—presbyterians, independents, and baptists—was 1,583; in 1827 it was 2,212; and in 1829 it had risen to 2,435. There were in addition to these the various bodies of methodists and unitarians. The dissenting congregations of every protestant denomination in England at the time of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts amounted to 6,422. The total number of churches and chapels in connection with the establishment at the same time was 9,983. Comparing the missionary agencies then employed by churchmen and dissenters, we find it stated that, while the former raised for home and foreign missions the sum of £67,528, the latter contributed the sum of £90,010. Thus the dissenters subscribed for the diffusion of Christianity in the world at home and abroad, beyond the bounds of their own congregations,

of the house than to excite a dormant animosity, all further opposition was there forborne, and assurances were given that every effort would be made to secure the concurrence of the house of lords. The duke of Wellington, with the other cabinet ministers, the two primates of the realm, with a large majority of the attending bishops, gave the measure their efficient support. A considerable proportion spoke in its favour, and those dissenters who witnessed the debates raised by their remaining adversaries could scarcely regret an opposition which elicited the well-merited praise of many distinguished members of their own communion, and the avowal of many principles in unison with their own on the great points of religious profession and religious liberty, and generally tending to mutual forbearance and harmony among those who hold the essentials of the common faith

of Christians. Such happy accompaniments to the progress and issue of the measure could not but greatly enhance the value of the concession. The dissenters alleged they did not seek a triumph over enemies, but an admission to common advantages as fellow-subjects and fellow-Christians.

The protestant society for the protection of religious liberty, which had been labouring in the good cause for nearly twenty years, referred to the triumph that had been achieved at its eighteenth annual meeting. The committee, in its report, after insisting on the necessity of making the distinction between "the rights of God" and "the rights of Cæsar," observe: "In proportion as religion is unencumbered and unbound by the policy, protection, and interference of the civil power, it will revive, expand, and diffuse its influence, and reform and bless the earth. Much, therefore, have they rejoiced at the recent measures which the British legislature have adopted; and while they would not undervalue the advantage that has resulted from the constant labours of the society in this great cause, nor the effects of the wide diffusion of education and knowledge, nor the power of opinion, nor the long and mighty labours of the illustrious friends of freedom who are hence departed, or who yet survive, they specially ascribe to a benignant Providence results which even enthusiasm scarce dared to hope could be so speedily and peacefully obtained. Vast, and, as they trust, blessed is the change!"

Sanguine though the dissenters had been respecting the growth of the principles of civil and religious liberty, of which the seeds had been sown in tears by the early puritan confessors, they did not anticipate that the harvest was at hand, and that, in a few short months after the appeal was made, they should have to record the triumphant discussion, the devout thanksgiving, and the festive celebration of their entire success. As the claims of the dissenters were not embarrassed by any question of divided allegiance or party politics, many members of parliament who had not supported the relief of the Roman catholics found themselves at liberty to advocate the cause of the protestant nonconformists; while almost all who had supported the greater measure of emancipation felt themselves bound by consistency to vote for the abolition of the sacramental test. Yet the victory was not achieved without a struggle. Lord John Russell said:—"The government took a clear, open, and decided part against us. They summoned their followers from every part of the empire. Nay, they issued a sort of 'hatti-sherif' for the purpose; they called upon every one within their influence who possessed the faith of a true mussulman to follow them in opposing the measure. But, notwithstanding their opposition in the debate, their arguments were found so weak, and in the division their numbers were found so deficient, that nothing could be more decided than our triumph."

Lord John Russell, who introduced the measure, lord Althorpe, Mr. Smith of Norwich, and Mr. Ferguson pleaded the cause of the dissenters with unanswerable arguments. They showed that the church was not now in danger; that there was no existing party bent

on subverting the constitution; that in the cases where the tests were not exacted during the last half century there was no instance of "a dissenter holding office who had abused his trust; that though the test act had been practically in abeyance during all that time, the church had suffered no harm. Why, then, preserve an offensive and discreditable act upon the statute book? Why keep up invidious distinctions, when there was no pretence of necessity for retaining them? Why, without the shadow of proof, presume disaffection against any class of the community? Even the members of the established church of Scotland might be debarred from serving their sovereign by those tests and penalties unless they renounced their religion. A whole nation was thus proscribed, upon the idle pretext that it was necessary to defend the church of another nation. It was asked, Did the church of England aspire, like the mussulmans of Turkey, to be exclusively charged with the defence of the empire? If so, let the presbyterians and dissenters withdraw, and it will be seen what sort of defence it will have. Take from the field of Waterloo the Scottish regiments; take away, too, the sons of Ireland: what then would have been the chance of victory? If they sought the aid of Scotch and Irish soldiers in the hour of peril, why deny them equal rights and privileges in times of peace? Besides, the church could derive no real strength from exclusion and coercion, which only generated ill-will and a rankling feeling of injustice. The established church of Scotland had been safe without any test and corporation acts. They had been abolished in Ireland half a century ago, without any evil accruing to the church in that country. It was contrary to the spirit of the age to keep up irritating yet inefficient and impracticable restrictions, which are a disgrace to the statute book.

Mr. Peel urged against the measure the usual conservative arguments—that it is dangerous to touch time-honoured institutions in an ancient monarchy like this, if the dissenters did not feel the tests as a grievance; if they did, it would be a very strong argument for a change. "But," he asked, "are the grievances now brought forward in parliament really felt as such by the dissenters out of doors? So far from it, there were only six petitions presented on the subject from 1816 to 1827. The petitions of last year were evidently got up for a political purpose." He quoted from a speech of Mr. Canning's, delivered, in 1825, on the catholic relief bill, in which he said, "This bill does not tend to equalise *all* the religions in the state, but to equalise all the dissenting sects of England. I am, and this bill is, for a predominant church, and I would not, even in appearance, meddle with the laws which secure that predominance to the church of England. What is the state of the protestant dissenters? It is that they labour under no practical grievances on account of this difference with the established church; that they sit with us in this house, and share our counsels; that they are admissible into the highest offices of state, and often hold them. Such is the operation of the Test and Corporation Acts, as mitigated by the Annual Indemnity Act; this much, and no more, I contend, the catholics should enjoy." With regard to Scotland Mr. Peel appealed to

the facts that from that country there was not one solitary petition; that there was not any military or naval office or command from which Scotchmen were shut out; that, so far from being excluded from the higher offices of government, out of the fourteen members who composed the cabinet, three—lord Aberdeen, lord Melville, and Mr. Grant—were Scotchmen, and good presbyterians. Even in England the shutting out, he said, was merely nominal. A protestant dissenter had been lord mayor of London the year before. The acts had practically gone into desuetude, and the existing law gave merely a nominal preponderance to the established church, which it was admitted on all hands it should possess.

The restrictions, however, if not to any great extent a practical grievance, were felt to be a stigma utterly undeserved, and the necessity for an annual indemnity act continually reminded a large, influential, intelligent, energetic portion of the nation of their inferiority to the rest of the king's subjects. The government felt that public opinion was against them. They therefore allowed the bill to go into committee without opposition, and there they adopted it as their own by carrying certain amendments. It passed the commons by a majority of 44, the numbers being 237 to 193. From the tone of the debate in the commons, it was evident that the government was not sorry to be left in a minority. In the house of lords the measure encountered more opposition. Lord Eldon, exasperated with the treatment he had received from the ministers, denounced it with the utmost vehemence. When he heard of its success in the lower house, he was in a state of consternation and despair. When it was about to be introduced to the lords, he wrote: "We who oppose shall be in but a wretched minority. The administration have, to their shame be it said, got the archbishops and most of the bishops to support this revolutionary bill. I voted as long ago as in the years, I think, 1787, 1789, and 1790 against a similar measure, lords North and Pitt opposing it as destructive of the church establishment; Dr. Priestley, a dissenting minister, then asserting that he had laid a train of gunpowder under the church which would blow it up; and Dr. Price, another dissenting minister, blessing God that he could depart in peace, as the revolution in France would lead here to the destruction of all union between church and state. The young men and lads in the house of commons are too young to remember these things. From 1790 to 1827 many and various have been the attempts to relieve the catholics. But through those thirty-seven years, nobody has thought of proposing such a bill as this in parliament as necessary or fit."

The prejudiced old man fought with desperation against the measure in the lords. He was tremendously severe on the government. He said, much as he had heard of the march of mind, he did not believe that the march could have been so rapid as to induce some of the changes of opinion which he had witnessed within the last year. His opinions are now among the curiosities of a bygone age. His idea of religious liberty may be seen from the following:—"The sacramental act, though often assailed, had remained ever since the reign of Charles II., and the annual indemnity took away all its harshness. The obnoxious act did not

interfere with the rights of conscience, as it did not compel any man to take the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England, and only deprived him of office if he did not." He concluded by solemnly saying, "From his heart and soul, not content." He was effectually answered by the duke of Wellington, and the bill was read a second time, without a division, on the 17th of April. On the 21st, he proposed an amendment to exclude Roman catholics from the benefit of the measure by inserting in the declaration the words, "I am a protestant." The amendment was negatived by 117 to 55; but so eager was he to have it adopted, that he renewed it on the third reading of the bill, when the contents were 52, not contents 154. Still he entered on the journals a violent protest against the bill, in which he was joined by the duke of Cumberland and nine other peers. As soon as the measure was carried, all the world acknowledged the duke of Wellington's sagacity in declining the offer of lord Eldon to return to office; for if that sturdy adherent to ancient prejudices had been lord chancellor or president of the council, the government must either have been speedily dissolved by internal dissensions, or overthrown by a vain resistance to the popular voice.

This act, which repeals the Test Act, provides another security in lieu of the tests repealed:—"And whereas the protestant episcopal church of England and Ireland, and the protestant presbyterian church of Scotland, and the doctrine, discipline, and government thereof respectively are by the laws of this realm severally established permanently and inviolably, I, A. B., do solemnly and sincerely, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, upon the true faith of a Christian, that I will never exercise any power, authority, or influence which I may possess by virtue of the office of ———, to injure or weaken the protestant church, as it is by law established in England, or to disturb the said church, or the bishops and clergy of the said church, in the possession of any rights and privileges to which such church, or the said bishops and clergy, are or may be by law entitled."

Great interest was excited by the discussion. "The Test Act Reporter" contained a special report of the proceedings, including parliamentary debates and public documents, which made a volume of more than five hundred pages. The reports of the debates in the *Times* newspaper were also reprinted in a volume, with a preface by the Rev. John Burder. On the 18th of June a public dinner, to commemorate the abolition of the sacramental test, was given at Freemasons' Hall, when his royal highness the duke of Sussex occupied the chair. The friends of the cause felt that to secure an aggregate meeting of the most opulent, talented, and influential dissenters from all parts of the empire was a measure of no common policy, and it was evident that the illustrious and noble guests felt at once surprised and gratified to witness the high respectability and generous enthusiasm of that great company. Mr. William Smith, as deputy chairman, proposed, in an interesting and appropriate speech, "the health of the duke of Sussex, and the universal prevalence of those principles which placed his family upon the throne." The health of the archbishops, bishops, and other members of the esta-

blished church who had advocated the rights of the dissenters was proposed by a baptist minister, the Rev. Dr. Cox. The health of "the protestant dissenting ministers, the worthy successors of the ever memorable two thousand, who sacrificed interest to conscience," having been proposed by the royal chairman, the Rev. Robert Aspland returned thanks. Another commemoration of the full admission of nonconformists to the privileges of the constitution was a medal struck by order of the united committee. The obverse side exhibits Britannia, seated on the right, presenting to a graceful figure of Liberty the act of repeal, while ~~Reigning, in the centre, raises her eyes to heaven with the~~ expression of thankfulness for the boon. The inscription on this side is "Sacramental Test Abolished, May 9th, 1828." The reverse side presents an open wreath, inclosing the words, "Truth, Freedom, Peace, and Charity."

CHAPTER XIII.

The Catholic Disabilities—Motion of Sir Francis Burdett—The Marquis Wellesley succeeded by Lord Anglesea in the Government of Ireland—The Act for the Suppression of the Catholic Association—Impolicy of Coercion—Fourteen Days' Meetings—Progress of Liberal Opinion in Parliament—Mr. O'Connell, his Character and Career; Grattan's Attack upon him—Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald—The Clare Election—Mr. Sheil—The Priest of Corrofin—O'Connell at Ennis—The Nomination—The Battle of the Priests and Landlords—The Triumphant Return of O'Connell—Profound Sensation in England—Mr. Peel's Reflections on the Event—Disaffection of Catholic Soldiers—Apprehensions of Insurrection—The Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel determine on Concession.

On the 8th of May the catholic claims were again brought forward by Sir Francis Burdett, who moved for a committee of the whole house, "with a view to such a final and conciliatory adjustment as may be conducive to the peace and strength of the United Kingdom, to the stability of the protestant establishment, and to the general satisfaction and concord of all classes of his majesty's subjects." The debate, which was animated and interesting, continued for three days. On a division, the motion for a committee was carried by 272 against 266, giving a majority of six only. But in the preceding session a similar motion had been lost by a majority of four. On the 16th of the same month, Sir Francis moved that the resolution be communicated to the lords in a free conference, and that their concurrence should be requested. This being agreed to, the conference was held, and the resolution was reported to the lords, who took it into consideration on the 9th of June. The debate, which lasted two days, was opened by the marquis of Lansdowne. The duke of Wellington opposed the resolution, which was lost by a majority of 181 to 137.

The state of opinion among the members of the government from the early part of this year may be traced in the memoirs of Sir Robert Peel, which comprise the confidential correspondence on the subject. The marquis of Wellesley had retired from the government of Ireland, and was succeeded by the marquis of Anglesea. The former nobleman would have given more satisfaction to the Irish Roman catholics; but he was overruled, as they believed, by Mr. Goulbourn, his chief secretary. His popularity and the confidence reposed in him were much increased by the fact that the marchioness was a Roman catholic, which,

however, proportionably rendered him an object of suspicion to the Orange party. The noble marquis was regarded by Mr. Peel with the most sincere respect and esteem, which was cordially reciprocated. In a letter dated January 30th, 1828, lord Wellesley wrote to him thus:—"Your most acceptable letter of the 29th instant enables me to offer to you now those assurances of gratitude, respect, and esteem which, to my sincere concern, have been so long delayed. Although these sentiments have not before reached you in the manner which would have been most suitable to the subject, I trust that you have not been unacquainted with the real impressions which your kindness and high character have fixed in my mind, and which it is always a matter of the most genuine satisfaction to me to declare. I am very anxious to communicate with you in the same unreserved confidence so long subsisting between us on the state of Ireland."

The main subject for consideration at that moment was the policy of continuing the act for the suppression of the Catholic Association, which was to expire at the end of the session of 1828. In connection with this subject, a letter from lord Anglesea came under consideration. It contained his first impressions of the state of affairs there. "Do keep matters quiet in parliament," he said, "if possible. The less that is said of catholic and protestant the better. It would be presumptuous to form an opinion, or even a sanguine hope, in so short a time, yet I cannot but think there is much reciprocal inclination to get rid of the bugbear, and soften down asperities. I am by no means sure that even the most violent would not be glad of an excuse for being less violent. Even at the association, they are at a loss to keep up the extreme irritation they had accomplished; and if they find they are not violently opposed, and that there is no disposition on the part of government to coercion, I do believe they will dwindle into moderation. If, however, we have a mind to have a good blaze again, we may at once command it by re-enacting the expiring bill, and when we have improved it and rendered it perfect, we shall find that it will not be acted upon. In short, I shall back Messrs. O'Connell's and Sheil's, and others' evasions against the crown lawyers' laws."

Mr. Lamb wrote to Mr. Peel to the same effect. The act, he said, had failed in fulfilling its main object, as well as every other advantageous purpose. To re-enact it would irritate all parties, and expose the ministry to odium. He alluded to sources of dissension that were springing up in the Roman catholic body, particularly the jealousy excited in the Roman catholic prelates by the power which the association had assumed over the parochial clergy. On the whole, his advice was against renewing the statute. On the 12th of April, lord Anglesea wrote a memorandum on the subject, in which he pointed out the impolicy of any coercive measure, which, to be effective, must interfere with the right of public meeting, and make a dangerous inroad on the constitution, at the same time displaying the weakness of the government, which is shown in nothing more than passing strong measures which there was not vigour to enforce. His information led him to believe that the higher orders of the Roman catholic clergy had long felt great jealousy of the ascendancy that the leaders of the

association had assumed over the lower priesthood. Besides, many of the most respectable of the catholic landlords were irritated at their tenantry for continuing to pay the catholic rent, contrary to their injunctions; and sooner or later he believed the poorer contributors must consider the impost as onerous, arbitrary, and oppressive. These matters he regarded as seeds of dissolution, which would be more than neutralised by any coercive attempt to put down the association. He felt confident that no material mischief could result from allowing the act quietly to expire, supported as the government was by "the powerful aid of that excellent establishment, the constabulary force, already working the greatest benefit, and capable of still further improvement, and protected as this force was by an efficient army, ably commanded."

In answer to some queries submitted to the attorney-general, Mr. Joy, he stated that when the old association was suppressed, the balance of catholic rent in the treasury was £14,000. He showed how the existing act had been evaded, and how useless it was to attempt to prevent the agitation by any coercive measure. They held "fourteen days' meetings," and it was amusing to read the notices convening those meetings, which always ran thus:—"A fourteen days' meeting will be held, pursuant to act of parliament"—as if the act had enjoined and required such meetings. Then there were aggregate meetings, and other "separate meetings," which were manifestly a continuation of the association. The same members attended, and the same routine was adopted. They also held simultaneous parochial meetings, by which the people were gathered into a solid and perilous confederacy.

Referring to the debate on the motion of Sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Peel noticed the progress that public opinion had made in parliament, and the weight of authority against him, which led the house of commons, for the first time since the general election, to decide in favour of emancipation. Among the speakers for the motion were Sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Doherty, solicitor-general for Ireland, lord Francis Egerton, Sir John Newport, Mr. Wilmot Horton, Sir James Macintosh, Mr. Brownlow, Mr. William Lamb, chief secretary for Ireland, Mr. Charles Grant, president of the board of trade, Mr. North, Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. Brougham. The speakers against the motion were Sir Charles Wetherall, Sir N. Tyndal, Sir Robert Inglis, Mr. William Duncomb, Mr. G. Bankes, Mr. G. Moore, Mr. Leslie Foster, and Mr. Peel. The latter gentleman observes that any one acquainted with the house of commons would readily admit that the great preponderance of talent and of influence on future decisions was ranged on the side of emancipation. Mr. Brownlow, who had been a distinguished leader of the Orange party in Ireland, had changed his opinion on the subject, though representing an Orange constituency; many of the younger members followed his example, and Mr. Peel remarked "that it very rarely if ever happened that the list of speakers against concession was reinforced by a young member of even ordinary ability."

Mr. Lamb retired with Mr. Huskisson, sending in his resignation to the duke of Wellington, indignant at "a

most cruel and audacious outrage" which he had received, declaring to Mr. Peel that as the changes effected by the duke entirely altered the aspect of affairs, and subverted the principle upon which he understood the government had been formed in January, he felt it impossible to continue in office with any regard to consistency; but he could not retire without expressing his high esteem for the character of the home secretary, and the perfect reliance he had always felt, and should always feel, upon that gentleman's honour and integrity. Mr. Lamb was succeeded as chief secretary by lord Francis Gower, afterwards lord Ellesmere. Among the offices vacated in consequence of the recent schism in the government, was that of president of the board of trade, which was accepted by Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, one of the members for the County Clare. He was consequently obliged to offer himself for re-election to his constituents, and this led to the memorable contest which decided the question of catholic emancipation.

This contest excited universal interest. Mr. O'Connell, the Roman catholic candidate, was not unknown in England. He had come to London as the leading member of a deputation to urge the concession of catholic emancipation upon the government and the legislature, when he met a number of the leading statesmen of the day at the house of the duke of Norfolk. He had been examined by a committee of the lords, together with the right Rev. Dr. Doyle, in 1825, on which occasion the ability he displayed, his extensive and accurate knowledge, his quickness in answering, and the clearness with which he conveyed information, excited the admiration of all parties. In the appeal case of Scully *versus* Scully he pleaded before lord Eldon. It was the first time he had appeared in his forensic character in this country. No sooner had he risen to address their lordships, than it was buzzed about the precincts of Westminster, and persons of all descriptions crowded in with anxious curiosity to witness the display, including several peers and members of parliament. He addressed their lordships for nearly two hours, during which the lord chancellor paid him great attention, though he had only thirty-three hours before carried the house of lords with him in rejecting the bill by which the great advocate would have been admitted to the full privileges of citizenship. Referring to this subject, lord Eldon wrote in his diary, "Mr. O'Connell pleaded as a barrister before me in the house of lords on Thursday. His demeanour was very proper, but he did not strike me as shining so much in argument as might be expected from a man who has made so much noise in his harangues in a seditious association." Lord Eldon's opinion was evidently tinged by the recollection of the "seditious harangues." It is a curious fact that the leading counsel on that occasion on the same side was Sir Charles Wetherall, then solicitor-general. The English admired the rich tones of O'Connell's voice, his clear and distinct articulation, his legal ingenuity, and the readiness with which he adapted himself to the tribunal before which he pleaded. One of the best speeches he ever made was delivered at the great meeting of the British Catholic Association, the duke of Norfolk presiding. He astonished his auditory on that occasion. In fact, he was

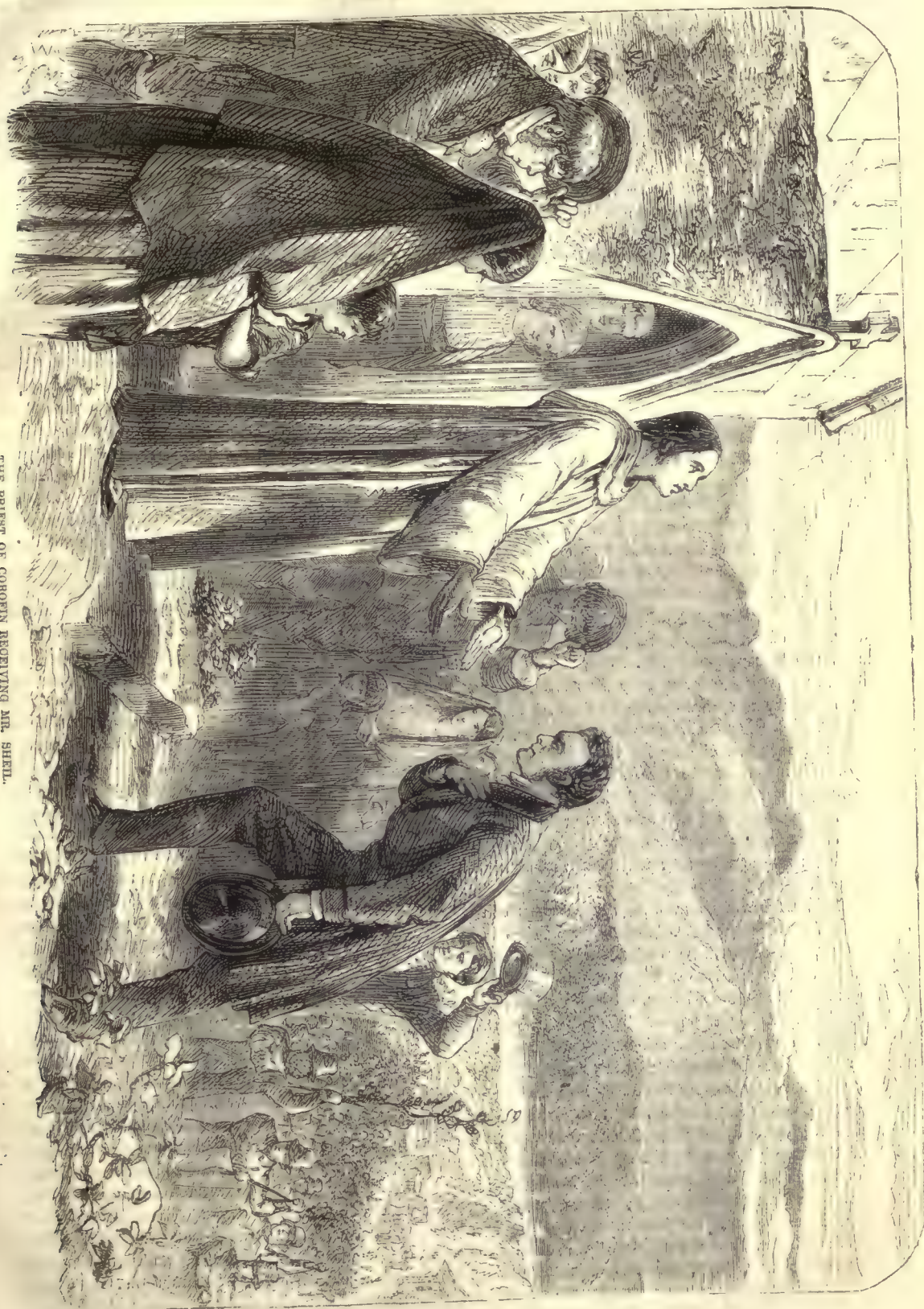
regarded as a lion in London. He won golden opinions wherever he went, by his blandness, vivacity, and wit in private, and his lofty bearing in public. His commanding figure, his massive chest, and his broad, good-humoured face, with thought and determination distinctly marked in his physiognomy, showed that he had the *physique* of a great leader of the masses, while he proved himself amongst his colleagues not more powerful in body than in mind and will. The confidence reposed in him in Ireland was unbounded. He was indeed the most remarkable of all the men who had ever advocated the catholic claims; the only one of their great champions fit to be a popular leader. Curran and Grattan were feeble and attenuated in body, and laboured under physical deficiencies, if the impulsive genius of the one or the fastidious pride of the other would have permitted them to be demagogues; O'Connell had all the qualities necessary for that character in perfection—"unflinching boldness, audacious assertion, restless motion, soaring ambition, untiring energy, exquisite tact, instinctive sagacity, a calculating, methodising mind, and a despotic will." He was by no means scrupulous in matters of veracity, and he was famous for his powers of vituperation; but, as he was accustomed to say himself, he was "the best abused man in Ireland." It was very seldom that his name was missed from the leaders of conservative journals, and he was the great object of attack at the meetings of the Brunswick clubs, which were called into existence to resist the Catholic Association. But of all his assailants, none dealt him more terrible blows than the venerable Henry Grattan, the hero of 1782. "Examine their leader," he exclaimed, "Mr. O'Connell. He assumes a right to direct the catholics of Ireland. He advises, he harangues, and he excites; he does not attempt to allay the passions of a warm and jealous people. Full of inflammatory matter, his declamations breathe everything but harmony; venting against Great Britain the most disgusting calumny, falsehood, and treachery, equalled only by his impudence, describing her as the most stupid, the most dishonest nation that ever existed. A man that could make the speeches he has made, utter the sentiments he has uttered, abuse the characters he has abused, praise the characters he has praised, violate the promises he has violated, propose such votes and such censures as he has proposed, can have little regard for private honour or for public character; he cannot comprehend the spirit of liberty, and he is unfitted to receive it. He betrays such a scattered understanding and barbarous mind, that if he got liberty, he would immediately lose it. His speaking is extravagant diction, a vulgar boast, a swaggering sentence, affected bombast, and ludicrous composition; his liberty is not liberal, his politics are not reason, his reading is not learning, his learning is not knowledge; his rhetoric is gaudy hyperbole, garnished with faded flowers—such as a drabbed girl would pick up in Covent Garden—stuck in with the taste of a kitchen maid. This man can bring forth nothing good. The womb of his mind is of such sinful mould that it can never produce anything that is not deformed. He barks, and barks, and even when the filthy slaverer has exhausted his poison and returns to

his kennel, he there still barks and howls within unseen." *

There is in all this much of the splenetic jealousy of an aged invalid towards a vigorous competitor, who has outstripped him in the race. O'Connell excited much hostility amongst the friends of emancipation by his opposition to the veto which they were willing to give to the British crown on the appointment of Roman catholic bishops by the court of Rome, as a security against the abuse of their power. But the more antagonists he had, and the more battles he fought, the greater was his hold on the Roman catholic priests and people. His power had arrived at its greatest height when the Canningites left the ministry, and Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald came to Ireland to seek the suffrages of the Clare electors as an influential member of the government. At first, no one had the least doubt of his triumphant return. He had been popular as chancellor of the exchequer in Ireland; he was a steady friend of catholic emancipation, for which he had always voted; he was personally popular; the gentry of the county were almost to a man devoted to him. It appears that Mr. O'Connell had at first no idea of starting against him. The proposal is said to have originated with Sir David Roose, who, having accidentally met Mr. P. V. Fitzpatrick on the 22nd of June, remarked that O'Connell ought to offer himself for Clare. Mr. Fitzpatrick then recollected having often heard Mr. John Keogh, of Mount Jerome, who had been the catholic leader for many years, express his conviction that emancipation would never be granted till a catholic was elected a member of parliament. If, when returned by a constituency, he was not permitted to take his seat, because he would not violate his conscience by swearing what he did not believe, John Bull, who is jealous of constitutional rights, would resent this wrong, and would require the oath to be altered for the sake of the constituency. The moment this thought occurred to Mr. Fitzpatrick, he ran to O'Connell, and begged of him to stand for Clare. They went to the office of the *Dublin Evening Post*, and there, in presence of Mr. F. W. Conway, the address to the electors was written. Still O'Connell shrank from the contest on account of the enormous cost. "You know," he said, "that, so far from being in circumstances to meet that outlay from my own resources, I am encumbered with heavy liabilities beyond my power of discharging. You are the only person with whom I am acquainted who knows intimately the catholic aristocracy and men of wealth. Would you undertake to sound them as to funds for the contest?" Fitzpatrick answered, "I will undertake it, and I am confident of success." Within an hour he got three men of wealth to put down their names for £100 each. The four then went round to the principal catholics of Dublin, and during the day they got £1,600 from sixteen persons. The country followed the example of the metropolis so liberally that £14,000 was raised within a week, and money continued to flow in during the contest. The supplies, however, were not sufficient for the enormous demand, and in the heat of the contest a messenger was sent post haste to Cork, and in an incredibly short

* "An Address to the Catholics of Ireland."

THE PRIEST OF COROPIN RECEIVING MR. SHELL.



space of time returned with £1,000 from Mr. Jerry Murphy, who himself subscribed £300, and got the remainder from its patriotic inhabitants.* The sum of £5,000 had been voted by the association for the expenses of the election. They had been very anxious to get a candidate to oppose Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, and a popular protestant, major Macnamara, had been requested to come forward, but he declined, on the ground of his personal obligations to the ministerial candidate. Indeed, there were few of the smaller gentry in the county on whom he had not conferred favours by the liberal distribution of places among their sons. The Roman catholic gentry were quite as much indebted to him as the protestants, and they were not ungrateful, for they stood by him on the hustings almost to a man. Mr. O'Connell was preceded by two friends, Tom Steel and O'Gorman Mahon; the former a protestant, the other a Roman catholic: both men remarkable for their chivalrous bearing, and a dashing, reckless spirit, which takes with the Irish peasantry. A third agitator entered the field in the person of honest Jack Lawless, another leading member of the association, and one of its most effective speakers. This band was soon joined by Father Tom Maguire, a famous controversialist, from the county of Leitrim, who had just been engaged in a discussion with the Rev. Mr. Pope, and was hailed by the peasantry as the triumphant champion of their faith. There was also a barrister, Mr. Dominick Ronayne, who spoke the Irish language, and who, throwing an educated mind into the powerful idiom of the country, produced great effects upon the passions of the people. Mr. Sheil, second only to O'Connell in energy and influence, and superior to him in the higher attributes of the orator, in the fiery temperament and imaginative faculty which constitute genius, flung himself into the arena with the greatest ardour. On the Sunday previous to the election each of these agitators was dispatched to a chapel situated in a district which was the stronghold of one or other of the most popular landlords, for the purpose of haranguing the people after mass, and rousing their enthusiasm to the highest pitch. Mr. Sheil went to a place called Corrofin, situated in a mountainous district, the property of Sir Edward O'Brien, father of Mr. Smith O'Brien, who drove to the place in his carriage, drawn by four horses. There he saw the whole population congregated, having advanced from the rocky hills in large bands, waving green boughs, and preceded by fifes and pipers. The hitherto popular landlord was received in solemn silence, while his antagonist, Mr. Sheil, was hailed with rapturous applause. Sir Edward O'Brien consequently lost heart, and, leaving his phaeton opposite the chapel-door, went to church. Mr. Sheil gives a graphic description of Father Murphy, the priest of this rudely-constructed mountain chapel. His form was tall, slender, and emaciated; "his ample hand was worn to a skinny meagretude; his face was long, sunken, and cadaverous, but was illuminated by eyes blazing with all the fire of genius and the enthusiasm of religion; his lank, black hair fell down in straight

lines along a lofty forehead. The sun was shining with brilliancy, and rendered his figure, attired as it was in white garments, more conspicuous. The scenery about was in harmony—it was wild and desolate." This priest met the envoy of the association on the threshold of his mountain temple, and hailed him with a solemn greeting. After mass the priest delivered an impassioned harangue. The spirit of sarcasm gleamed over his features, and shouts of laughter attended his description of a miserable catholic who should prove recreant to the great cause, by making a sacrifice of his country to his landlord. "The close of his speech," says Mr. Sheil, "was peculiarly effective. He became inflamed by the power of his emotions, and, while he raised himself into the loftiest attitude to which he could ascend, he laid one hand on the altar and shook the other in the spirit of almost prophetic admonition, and, while his eyes blazed and seemed to start from his forehead, thick drops fell down his face, and his voice rolled through lips livid with passion and covered with foam. It is almost unnecessary to say that such an appeal was irresistible. The multitude burst into shouts of acclamation, and would have been ready to mount a battery roaring with cannon at his command. Two days after the results were felt at the hustings, and while Sir Edward O'Brien stood aghast, Father Murphy marched into Ennis at the head of his tenantry, and polled them to a man in favour of Daniel O'Connell."*

The way having been thus prepared, Mr. O'Connell proceeded to the scene of the contest. On the day of his departure his carriage, with four horses, drove into the yard of the Four Courts, where he had been engaged on an important trial. Having concluded his address to the judges, he put off his wig and gown, and proceeded through the hall, where he was followed by the lawyers and the persons from the different courts, so that the judges were deserted. Stepping into his open barouche, accompanied by Mr. P. O'Gorman, secretary of the association, Mr. R. Scott, solicitor, and Father Murphy, the celebrated parish priest of Corrofin, he drove off amidst the cheers of all present. The greatest possible excitement prevailed along the whole route, and he enjoyed an ovation at every town he passed through. At Ennis, though he entered the town by daybreak, the trades and the inhabitants turned out in procession to meet him. Priests swarmed in all the streets, and in every face there was a joyous and exulting expression of triumph.

The court house on the day of nomination presented a striking scene. On the left hand of the sheriff stood a cabinet minister, attended by the whole body of the aristocracy and gentry, protestant and catholic, of the county Clare. On the right stood Mr. O'Connell, with scarcely a single gentleman by his side. But he was "the man of the people" and of the priests, and so he was master of the situation. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald was proposed by Sir Edward O'Brien, and seconded by Sir A. Fitzgerald. The ministerial candidate first addressed the freeholders. He was an accomplished gentleman and an excellent speaker. Mr. Sheil, who was present, remarked that he delivered

* "Life and Times of Daniel O'Connell," by W. Fagan, Esq., M.P., vol. I, p. 553.

* Sheil's Speeches, p. 54.

one of the most effective and dextrous speeches it had ever been his good fortune to hear. His venerable father, who had voted against the union in the Irish parliament, was now on his death-bed, and the knowledge of the contest had been kept from him, lest the excitement should hasten his departure. In alluding to him, and to his own services to the county, Mr. Fitzgerald's eyes filled with tears, and there were few amongst his opponents, excited as they were against him, who did not give the same evidence of emotion: "and when he sat down, although the great majority of the audience were strongly opposed to him, and were enthusiasts in favour of the rival candidate, a loud and unanimous burst of acclamation shook the court-house."

Mr. O'Connell rose to address the people in reply. It was manifest that he considered great exertion to be requisite in order to do away with the impression which his antagonist had produced. It was clear that he was collecting all his might, to those who were acquainted with the workings of his physiognomy. Mr. O'Connell bore Mr. Fitzgerald no sort of personal aversion, but he determined, in this exigency, to have little mercy on his feelings, and to employ all the power of vituperation of which he was possessed against him. "This," remarks Mr. Sheil, "was absolutely necessary; for if more dextrous fencing had been resorted to by Mr. O'Connell, many might have gone away with the opinion that, after all, Mr. Fitzgerald had been thanklessly treated by the catholic body. It was, therefore, disagreeably requisite to render him for the moment odious. Mr. O'Connell began by awakening the passions of the multitude in an attack on Mr. Fitzgerald's allies. Mr. Gore had lauded him highly. This Mr. Gore is of Cromwellian descent, and the people detest the memory of the protector to this day. There is a tradition (I know not whether it has the least foundation) that the ancestor of this gentleman's family was a nailer by trade in the puritan army. Mr. O'Connell, without any direct reference to the fact, used a set of metaphors, such as 'striking the nail on the head,' 'putting a nail into a coffin,' which at once recalled the associations which were attached to the name of Mr. Gore, and roars of laughter assailed that gentleman on every side. Mr. Gore has the character of being not only very opulent, but of bearing regard to his possessions proportionate to their extent. Nothing is so unpopular as prudence in Ireland; and Mr. O'Connell rallied Mr. Gore to such a point upon this head, and that of his supposed origin, that the latter completely sunk under the attack. He next proceeded to Mr. Fitzgerald, and having thrown in a picture of the late Mr. Perceval, he turned round, and asked of the rival candidate with what face he could call himself their friend, when the first act of his political life was to enlist himself under the banners of 'the bloody Perceval?' This violent epithet was sent into the hearts of the people with a force of expression and a furious vehemence of will that created a great sensation amongst the crowd, and turned the tide against Mr. Fitzgerald."

It was necessary that Roman catholic electors should take an oath and obtain a certificate of their having done

so from a magistrate. The friends of Mr. Fitzgerald insisted that this oath should be taken, which caused considerable delay; but a magistrate having been obtained, the freeholders were sworn *en masse*. Brought into a yard, inclosed within four walls, twenty-five voters were placed against each wall, and thus the oath was simultaneously taken. The effects of this machinery upon the poll soon became manifest. Mr. O'Connell ran ahead of his opponent, and on the second day the result was no longer doubtful. Mr. Fitzgerald would have abandoned the contest, but the landlords resolved that the last man whom they could command should be polled out. They exerted themselves to the utmost to prevent the defection of their tenantry. The most influential of them had their freeholders mustered in a body, and came forward to the hustings at their head, exhorting, promising, threatening, reminding them of past favours, and hinting at the consequences of forsaking their best friends and natural protectors; but the moment O'Connell or a priest appeared, shouting, "Vote for your country, boys!" "Vote for the old religion!" "Down with Vesey!" "Hurrah for O'Connell!" they changed sides to a man, with a wild, responsive cheer. One priest, Father Coffey, adhered to Mr. Fitzgerald. "But," says Mr. Sheil, "the scorn and detestation with which he was treated by the mob clearly proved that a priest has no influence over them when he attempts to run counter to their political passions. He can hurry them on in the career in which their own feelings impel them, but he cannot turn them into another course." The generality of the orators were heard with loud and clamorous approbation; but at a late hour one evening, when it was growing rapidly dark, a priest came forward on the platform, who addressed the multitude in Irish. Ten thousand peasants were assembled before the speaker, and a profound stillness hung over the almost breathless mass. For some minutes they continued thus deeply attentive, and seemed to be struck with awe as he proceeded. Suddenly the priest and the whole multitude knelt down with the precision of a regimental evolution. Priest and people were both silent, but they were offering up a mental prayer for mercy on the soul of one of Vesey Fitzgerald's voters, who had died that day, and had been accused of taking a bribe. The polling, which lasted five days, at length closed. The court-house was again crowded, as on the first day. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald appeared again at the head of the aristocracy, and Mr. O'Connell at the head of the priests and the "Forties." The moment the latter was declared by the sheriff duly elected, the first Roman catholic M.P. since the revolution, a friend presented him with a letter to be franked. Addressed to a member of the house of commons, it was posted that night, and when it arrived at its destination it was handed about amongst the members, exciting curiosity and astonishment. It was said also to have found its way to the king, who probably felt thankful that his brother, the duke of York, did not live to see "Daniel O'Connell, M.P." Mr. O'Connell made a speech, distinguished by just feeling and good taste, and begged that Mr. Fitzgerald would forgive him, if he had on the first day given him any sort of offence. Mr. Fitzgerald came forward,

and unaffectedly assured him that whatever was said should be forgotten. He was again hailed with universal acclamation, and delivered an admirable speech. During the progress of the election, he could not refrain from repeatedly expressing his astonishment at what he saw, and from indulging in melancholy forebodings of events of which these incidents were perhaps but the heralds. "Where is all this to end?" was a question frequently put in his presence, and from which he seemed to shrink. Mr. Sheil, in a speech at the close of the election, thus accounted for the phenomenon:—"We have put a great engine into action, and applied the entire force of that powerful machinery which the law has placed under our control. We are masters of the passions of the people, and we have employed our dominion with a terrible effect. But, sir, do you, or does any man here, imagine that we could have acquired this formidable ability to sunder the strongest ties by which the different classes of society are fastened, unless we found the materials of excitement in the state of society itself? Do you think that Daniel O'Connell has himself, and by the single powers of his own mind, unaided by any external co-operation, brought the country to this great crisis of agitation? Mr. O'Connell, with all his talent for excitation, would have been utterly powerless and incapable, unless he had been allied with a great conspirator against the public peace; and I will tell you who that confederate is—it is the law of the land itself that has been Mr. O'Connell's main associate, and that ought to be denounced as the mighty agitator of Ireland. The rod of oppression is the wand of this enchanter; and the book of his spells is the penal code! Break the wand of this political Prospero, and take from him the volume of his magic, and he will evoke the spirits which are now under his control no longer. But why should I have recourse to illustration, which may be accounted fantastical, in order to elucidate what is in itself so plain and obvious? Protestant gentlemen, who do me the honour to listen to me, look, I pray you, a little dispassionately at the real causes of the events which have taken place amongst you. . . . In no other country, except in this, would such a revolution have been effected. Wherefore? Because in no other country are the people divided by the law from their superiors, and cast into the hands of a set of men who are supplied with the means of national excitement by the system of government under which we live. Surely, no man can believe that such an anomalous body as the Catholic Association could exist excepting in a community that has been alienated from the state by the state itself. The discontent and the resentment of seven millions of the population have generated that domestic government which sways public opinion, and uses the national passions as the instruments of its will. It would be utterly impossible, if there were no exasperating distinctions amongst us, to create any artificial causes of discontent. Let men declaim for a century, and if they have no real grievance their harangues will be empty sound and idle air. But when what they tell the people is true—when they are sustained by substantial facts, effects are produced, of which what has taken place at

this election is only an example. The whole body of the people having been previously excited, the moment any incident such as this election occurs, all the popular passions start simultaneously up, and bear down every obstacle before them. Do not, therefore, be surprised that the peasantry should throw off their allegiance when they are under the operation of emotions which it would be wonderful if they could resist. The feeling by which they are actuated would make them not only vote against their landlord, but would make them scale the batteries of a fortress, and mount the breach; and, gentlemen, give me leave to ask you whether, after a due reflection upon the motives by which your vassals (for so they are accounted) are governed, you will be disposed to exercise any measure of severity in their regard?"

The letters sent by Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald to Mr. Peel, pending the contest, show how painful were his apprehensions, and how deep his distress, at the utterly unforeseen turn things had taken in his native county. On the 17th of June he wrote, "I have every reason to fear a violent and exasperated contest. The association has taken the field, and addresses are directed to be prepared to the bishops, the clergy, and the population of Clare. On Sunday, I am informed, that exhortations were to be addressed to the congregations, and a circular letter is to be read at all the altars on next Sunday. I am told that, though there is a great schism among them, O'Connell and the violent ones have carried it all their own way. Mr. O'Connell says he cannot go down, but that, I know, is because he is afraid of personal risk and danger. I am now embarked in, and I must go through with it. I am greatly harassed by all this, and if I write incoherently, you must excuse it. I only write because you desired it, and because I know you will be anxious about me and my prospects in this cursed affair." In reply to this, Mr. Peel gave his friend some prudent advice. He said:—"Disregard entirely all personalities, whether proceeding from O'Connell or others of his stamp. It really is quite unnecessary for a gentleman and a minister of the crown to notice the low slang of a county election. It gives a vast advantage over the gentlemen of a county, if they are to place themselves on a level with every blackguard who wantonly attempts to provoke them. File an information against Mr. O'This and Mr. MacThat, and every real gentleman will applaud the true courage of doing so." From Clare Mr. Fitzgerald wrote as follows:—"Nothing can equal the violence here. The proceedings of yesterday were those of madmen; but the country is mad, and they have been allowed to proceed in the career of revolution. It will not, cannot, end well. I fear it will be a tremendous contest. An ineffectual attempt was made to resist Mr. O'Connell, but all were borne down by the violence of the meeting. I only hope that some man whom I can notice without dishonour may repeat the calumnies and the language which Mr. O'C., in the impunity which he enjoys, has dared to address to me. —Most affectionately yours, W. V. FITZGERALD."

On the 5th of July he again wrote to Mr. Peel:—"The election, thank God, is over, and I do feel happy in its being terminated, notwithstanding its result. I have

polled all the gentry and all the fifty pound freeholders—the gentry to a man. All the great interests broke down, and the desertion has been universal. Such a scene as we have had! Such a tremendous prospect as it opens to us! The conduct of the priests has passed all that you could picture to yourself. I have kept on for five days, and it was a hopeless contest from the first. Everything was against me; indeed, I do not understand how I have not been beaten by a greater majority. For the degradation of the county I feel deeply; and the organisation exhibited is so complete and so formidable that no man can contemplate without alarm what is to follow in this wretched country.”

There was, however, no violation of the peace, which lord Anglesea had taken effective measures to preserve. He had placed at the disposal of major Warburton 47 artillery, with two 6-pounders; 120 cavalry, and 415 infantry. These were at Clare Castle, close at hand; within a few hours there were 183 cavalry, and 1,313 infantry; within thirty-six hours, 28 cavalry, 1,367 infantry, and two 6-pounders; and at a further distance there was a regiment of cavalry and above 800 infantry. There were besides, on duty at Ennis, 300 of the constabulary.

Mr. Peel's reflections on the Clare election are deeply interesting. “It afforded,” he writes, in his Memoirs, “a decisive proof, not only that the instrument on which the protestant proprietor had hitherto mainly relied for the maintenance of his political influence had completely failed him, but that, through the combined exertions of the agitator and the priest—or, I should rather say, through the contagious sympathies of a common cause among all classes of the Roman catholic population—the instrument of defence and supremacy had been converted into a weapon fatal to the authority of the landlord. However men might differ as to the consequences which ought to follow the event, no one denied its vast importance. It was seen by the most intelligent that the Clare election would be the turning point in the catholic question—the point—

“*Partes ubi se via findit in ambas.*”

The home secretary thus refers to a letter of lord Eldon, written to his daughter soon after the event, as follows:—“After observing, ‘Nothing is talked of now which interests anybody the least in the world, except the election of Mr. O’Connell,’ he makes these memorable remarks:—‘As Mr. O’Connell will not, though elected, be allowed to take his seat in the house of commons unless he will take the oaths, &c. (and that he won’t do unless he can get absolution), his rejection from the commons may excite rebellion in Ireland. At all events, this business must bring the Roman catholic question, which has been so often discussed, to a crisis and a conclusion. The nature of that conclusion I do not think likely to be favourable to protestantism.’ It is clear, therefore,” continues Mr. Peel, “that lord Eldon was fully alive to the real character and magnitude of the event.”

Having given the letters above referred to, Mr. Peel resumes:—“The last letter of Mr. Fitzgerald is especially worthy of remark. Can there be a doubt that the

example of the county would have been all-powerful in the case of every future election in Ireland for those counties in which a Roman catholic constituency preponderated? It is true that Mr. O’Connell was the most formidable competitor whom Mr. Fitzgerald could have encountered; it is possible that that which took place in Clare would not have taken place had any other man than Mr. O’Connell been the candidate; but he must be blind, indeed, to the natural progress of events, and to the influence of example, in times of public excitement, on the feelings and passions of men, who could cherish the delusive hope that the instrument of political power, shivered to atoms in the county of Clare, would still be wielded with effect in Cork or Galway.

“The Clare election supplied the manifest proof of an abnormal and unhealthy condition of the public mind in Ireland—the manifest proof that the sense of a common grievance and the sympathies of a common interest were beginning to loosen the ties which connect different classes of men in friendly relations to each other, to weaken the force of local and personal attachments, and to unite the scattered elements of society into a homogeneous and disciplined mass, yielding willing obedience to the assumed authority of superior intelligence hostile to the law and to the government which administered it. There is a wide distinction (though it is not willingly recognised by a heated party) between the hasty concession to unprincipled agitation and provident precaution against the explosion of public feeling, gradually acquiring the strength which makes it irresistible. ‘Concede nothing to agitation,’ is the ready cry of those who are not responsible—the vigour of whose decisions is often proportionate to their own personal immunity from danger, and imperfect knowledge of the true state of affairs. A prudent minister, before he determines against all concession—against any yielding or compromise of former opinions—must well consider what it is that he has to resist, and what are his powers of resistance. His task would be an easy one if it were sufficient to resolve that he would yield nothing to violence or to the menace of physical force. In this case of the Clare election, and of its natural consequences, what was the evil to be apprehended? Not force, not violence, not any act of which law could take cognisance. The real danger was in the peaceable and legitimate exercise of a franchise according to the will and conscience of the holder. In such an exercise of that franchise, not merely permitted, but encouraged and approved by constitutional law, was involved a revolution of the electoral system in Ireland—the transfer of political power, so far as it was connected with representation, from one party to another. The actual transfer was the least of the evil; the process by which it was to be effected—the repetition in each county of the scenes of the Clare election—the fifty pound freeholders, the gentry, to a man polling one way, their alienated tenantry another—all the great interests of the county broken down—‘the universal desertion’ (I am quoting the expressions of Mr. Fitzgerald)—the agitator and the priest laughing to scorn the baffled landlord—the local heaving and throes of society on every casual vacancy in a county—the universal convulsion at a general election—this was

the danger to be apprehended; those were the evils to be resisted. What was the power of resistance? 'Alter the law, and remodel the franchise,' was the ready, the improvident response. If it had been desired to increase the strength of a formidable confederacy, and, by rallying round it the sympathies of good men and of powerful parties in Great Britain, to insure for it a signal triumph, to extinguish the hope of effecting an amicable adjustment of the catholic question, and of applying a corrective to the real evils and abuses of elective franchise, the best way to attain these pernicious ends would have been to propose to parliament, on the part of the government, the abrupt extinction of the forty shilling franchise in Ireland, together with the continued maintenance of civil disability.

"I well know that there are those upon whom such considerations as these to which I have been adverting will make but a faint impression. Their answer to all such appeals is the short, in their opinion the conclusive, declaration—The protestant constitution in church and state must be maintained at all hazards, and by any means; the maintenance of it is a question of principle, and every concession or compromise is the sacrifice of principle to a low and vulgar expediency. This is easily said; but how was Ireland to be governed? How was the protestant constitution in church and state to be maintained in that part of the empire? Again I can anticipate the reply—By the overwhelming sense of the people of Great Britain; by the application, if necessary, of physical force for the maintenance of authority; by the employment of the organised strength of government, the police and the military, to enforce obedience to the law."

Then—by a process of argument so close, so logical, as to amount to a demonstration—Sir Robert Peel meets this objection, and shows that the proposals of the conservative party afforded no solution of the real difficulty. Granted that the overwhelming sense of the people of Great Britain was against concession, what aid could they afford in the daily, practical administration of the law in Ireland? If seditious libels were to be punished, or illegal confederacies, dangerous to the public peace, to be suppressed, the offenders could only be corrected and checked through the intervention of an Irish jury, little disposed, if fairly selected, to defer in times of political excitement to the authority of English opinion. But the real difficulty to be surmounted was not the violation of the law; it lay, rather, in the novel exercise of constitutional franchises, in the application of powers recognised and protected by the law, the power of speech, the power of meeting in public assemblies, the systematic and not unlawful application of all these powers to one definite purpose—namely, the organisation of a force which professed to be a moral force, but had for its object to encroach, step by step, on the functions of regular government, to paralyse its authority, and to acquire a strength which might ultimately render irresistible the demand for civil equality. If, then, Irish agitation could not be repressed through the action of Irish juries, if the agitators kept strictly within the letter of the law, so that even a conviction by an Irish jury might be pronounced, by the highest legal authorities in England, an act making

trial by jury "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare," how was the public opinion of England and Scotland to be brought to bear in putting down the popular will in Ireland? Through what channel was the control of the people of one nation over another to be exercised? It could be only done through the imperial parliament, by having a law passed to suspend or abolish the constitution in Ireland. But the existing parliament could not be got to pass any such measure, for the house of commons had just voted that the proper way to put down agitation in Ireland was to grant catholic emancipation; and that the remedy of establishing civil equality ought to be tried without delay. Was there any hope that a dissolution of parliament would produce different results? No; for at the general election of 1826, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, and Devonshire sent representatives to parliament, a majority of whom voted against the maintenance of protestant ascendancy in Ireland. The members for London, for Liverpool, for Norwich, for Coventry, for Leicester, were equally divided on the question; while the members for Westminster, Southwark, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Preston, Chester, and Derby voted unanimously for concession. Now, the parliament which assumed this liberal complexion had been elected under circumstances calculated to call forth the strongest manifestation of protestant feeling; for it was only the previous year that, after long discussion and a severe contest, the commons had sent up to the lords, by a majority of twenty-one, a bill for the repeal of Roman catholic disabilities. Then, with regard to Ireland, what would have been the effect of a general election there? Would not the example of Clare have been imitated in every county and borough where the Roman catholic electors were the majority? And what would have been the effect of such an attempt on the public peace? Probably, to involve the whole island in the horrors of a civil and religious war; to be followed by another penal code. Referring to the means at the disposal of the government for putting down the agitations by military force, Sir Robert Peel has the following remarkable passage:—"This is a very delicate matter to discuss; but why have I deferred for twenty years this vindication of my conduct? Why have I consented to submit for that long period to every reproach which malice, or mistake, or blindness to the real state of affairs could direct against me, except in the hope that the time would come (I cared little whether I were in the grave or not when it should come), when delicate matters might safely be discussed, and when, without prejudice to the public interests, or offence to private feelings, the whole truth might be spoken? I deliberately affirm that a minister of the crown, responsible at the time of which I am speaking for the public peace and the public welfare, would have grossly and scandalously neglected his duty if he had failed to consider whether it might not be possible that the fever of political and religious excitement which was quickening the pulse and fluttering the bosom of the whole catholic population—which had inspired the serf of Clare with the resolution and energy of a free man—which had, in the twinkling of an eye, made all considerations of personal gratitude, ancient

family connection, local preferences, the fear of worldly injury, the hope of worldly advantage, subordinate to the all-absorbing sense of religious obligation and public duty—whether, I say, it might not be possible that the contagion of that feverish excitement might spread beyond the barriers which, under ordinary circumstances, the habits of military obedience and the strictness of military discipline opposed to all such external influences.”

The chief governor of Ireland, at that time, was no timid civilian. He was a brave and distinguished soldier—a man of chivalrous honour himself, and therefore not

and commanded the force at Clare during the election. He testified, as the result of his observation there, that, even in the constabulary and the army, the sympathies of a common cause, political and religious, could not be altogether repressed, and that implicit reliance could not long be placed on the effect of discipline and the duty of obedience. On the 20th of July lord Anglesea wrote as follows:—“We hear occasionally of the catholic soldiers being ill-disposed, and entirely under the influence of the priests. One regiment of infantry is said to be divided into Orange and catholic factions. It is certain that, on



LORD MORPETH (AFTERWARDS EARL OF CARLISLE).

prone to entertain doubts injurious to the honour of the profession of which he was an ornament. But lord Anglesea was also capable of estimating the force of popular contagious influences on military discipline and fidelity in an extraordinary national crisis; and he was so alarmed at the state of things developed by the Clare election, that he wrote confidentially to Mr. Peel, cautioning him against supposing that Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, from vexation and disappointment, should exaggerate the danger of the crisis, and telling him that he would send major Warburton on a secret mission, known only to his private secretary, to explain to the government in London the state of affairs. Major Warburton, a very intelligent and trustworthy officer, was at the head of the constabulary,

the 12th of July, the guard at the castle had Orange lilies about them.” On the 26th of July the viceroy wrote another letter, from which the following is an extract:—“The priests are using very inflammatory language, and are certainly working upon the catholics of the army. I think it important that the depôts of Irish recruits should be gradually removed, under the appearance of being required to join their regiments, and that whatever regiments are sent here should be those of Scotland, or, at all events, of men not recruited from the south of Ireland. I desired Sir John Byng to convey this opinion to lord Hill.”

In the meantime, Mr. Peel had, in the previous month, communicated with the duke of Wellington, and inti-

mated his wish to retire from the cabinet, and from the leadership of the house of commons, in consequence of his being in the minority upon a question which, of all others, most deeply affected the condition and prospects of Ireland, with the government of which he was charged as home secretary. The duke of Wellington's sentiments did not differ from his as to the embarrassment that must arise from divided counsels in the cabinet. The duke also acted upon the earnest advice of Mr. Peel not to take a course which would preclude an early settlement of the question. In the debate on lord Lansdowne's motion, on the 9th of June, that the lords should concur in the resolution passed by the house of commons, the duke and lord chancellor Lyndhurst took part in the debate, and, though they did not concur in the resolution, which was rejected by a majority of 44, the general tenor of their speeches and of those of the bishops led lord Lansdowne to observe, in reply, that he thought the noble lord on the woolsack and the noble duke must have had the intention of conceding the catholic claims, for no one knew better than they did the danger of holding out expectations which could not be realised. The session of 1828 was closed by a speech from the throne on the 28th of July. As only three weeks of the session had to elapse after the Clare election, Mr. O'Connell did not offer to take his seat, preferring to make the most of the "M.P." in the work of agitation till the meeting of parliament in the spring. And, besides, he was probably aware that he would have no opportunity of making a speech. If he appeared, the speaker would desire him to take the oaths required by law; and if he declined, he would treat him as a stranger and intruder, and listen to nothing he had to say. He could not be summoned to the house, and compelled to attend, because he was not returned at a general election; and it was thought better to let him enjoy his senatorial honours unmolested for six months, than to enter, at the close of the session, into an irritating and protracted contest. On the 2nd of July, in a letter to lord Francis Leveson Gower, the viceroy gave his deliberate opinion of the state of Ireland in the following remarkable terms:—"I begin by premising that I hold in abhorrence the association, the agitators, the priests, and their religion; and I believe that not many, but that some, of the bishops, are mild, moderate, and anxious to come to a fair and liberal compromise for the adjustment of the points at issue. I think that these latter have very little, if any, influence with the lower clergy and the population.

"Such is the extraordinary power of the association, or, rather, of the agitators, of whom there are many of high ability, of ardent mind, of great daring (and if there was no association, these men are now too well known not to maintain their power under the existing order of exclusion), that I am quite certain they could lead on the people to open rebellion at a moment's notice; and their organisation is such that, in the hands of desperate and intelligent leaders, they would be extremely formidable. The hope, and indeed the probability, of present tranquillity rests upon the forbearance and the not very determined courage of O'Connell, and on his belief, as well as that of the principal men amongst them, that they will carry their

cause by unceasing agitation, and by intimidation, without coming to blows. I believe their success inevitable; that no power under heaven can arrest its progress. There may be rebellion—you may put to death thousands—you may suppress it, but it will only be to put off the day of compromise; and, in the meantime, the country is still more impoverished, and the minds of the people are, if possible, still more alienated, and ruinous expense is entailed upon the empire. But supposing that the whole evil was concentrated in the association, and that, if that was suppressed, all would go smoothly, where is the man who can tell me how to suppress it? Many cry out that the nuisance must be abated—that the government is supine—that the insolence of the demagogues is intolerable; but I have not yet found one person capable of pointing out a remedy. All are mute when you ask them to define their proposition. All that even the most determined opposers to emancipation say is, that it is better to leave things as they are than to risk any change. But will things remain as they are? Certainly not. They are bad; they must get worse; and I see no possible means of improving them but by depriving the demagogues of the power of directing the people; and by taking Messrs. O'Connell, Sheil, and the rest of them, from the association, and placing them in the house of commons, this desirable object would be at once accomplished.

"The present order of things must not, cannot last. There are three modes of proceeding: first, that of trying to go on as we have done; secondly, to adjust the question by concession, and such guards as may be deemed indispensable; thirdly, to put down the association, and to crush the power of the priests. The first I hold to be impossible. The second is practicable and advisable. The third is only possible by supposing that you can reconstruct the house of commons, and to suppose that is to suppose that you can totally alter the feelings of those who send them there. I believe nothing short of the suspension of the habeas corpus act and martial law will effect the third proposition. This would effect it during their operation, and, perhaps, for a short time after they had ceased, and then every evil would return with accumulated weight. But no house of commons would consent to these measures until there is open rebellion, and therefore till that occurs it is useless to think of them. The second mode of proceeding is, then, I conceive, the only practicable one; but the present is not propitious to effect even this. I abhor the idea of truckling to the overbearing catholic demagogues. To make any movement towards conciliation under the present excitement and system of terror would revolt me; but I do most conscientiously, and after the most earnest consideration of the subject, give it as my conviction that the first moment of tranquillity should be seized to signify the intention of adjusting the question, lest another period of calm should not present itself."

Lord Anglesea had expressed himself so strongly in his communications with the government, that he was afraid of being regarded by them as a partisan. He deprecated giving the executive any additional powers, though not without apprehensions of a rebellion, which he believed he had sufficient force to quell, even in the improbable event

of foreign aid, upon which some of the Irish people might, however rashly, rely for success. On the 20th of July he wrote: "It appears not improbable there may be an attempt to introduce arms, and finally insurrection. I am quite sure the disaffected are amply organised for the undertaking. They are partially but ill-armed. Pikes, however, to any amount, and at very short notice, would be easily manufactured, if they are not already made and secreted. Still, I cannot bring myself to believe that the ruling characters are at all inclined to put their cause to the test of arms; and if they do, I cannot imagine how, without foreign aid—of which there appears no fear—they can calculate upon success." The priests had become *all* silent and reserved, even towards those with whom they had hitherto maintained confidential intercourse. No money would tempt them to make a single disclosure, and there was a general impression among them that some great event was at hand. The law officers of the crown had been consulted as to the expediency of prosecuting some of the agitators for the most violent of their speeches; but their advice was, that it could not be done with any prospect of success, because their most exciting stimulants were accompanied by declarations that they wished only to guard the government against insurrection, which only concession could prevent. Such being the condition of Ireland, the position of the government was in the highest degree perplexing. The house of commons was for emancipation; the lords were opposed to it; the king was opposed to it. The strength of political parties was nicely balanced in parliament, and strong political excitement prevailed on both sides of the channel. Sir Robert Peel, in view of this state of affairs, says: "I maturely and anxiously considered every point which required consideration, and I formed a decision as to the obligation of public duty, of which I may say with truth that it was wholly at variance with that which the regard for my own personal interests or private feelings would have dictated." His intention was to relinquish office; but he resolved not to do so without placing on record his opinion that a complete change of policy was necessary, that the catholic question should no longer be an open question, and that the whole condition of Ireland, political and social, should be taken into consideration by the cabinet, precisely in the same manner in which every other question of grave importance was considered, and with the same power to offer advice upon it to the sovereign. He also gave it as his decided opinion that there was less evil and less danger in conceding the catholic claims than in persevering in the policy of resistance. He left London for Brighton soon after the close of the session, having made a previous arrangement with the duke of Wellington that he should send him a memorandum explanatory of his views on the state of Ireland and on the catholic question, and that he should write to the duke fully in reply. On the 9th of August the duke wrote to him as follows:—"I now send you the memorandum which I sent to the king on the state of Ireland, a letter which I sent to him at the same time, his answer, a memorandum upon the Roman catholic question which I have since drawn up, and a letter which I wrote yesterday to the lord chancellor."

The result of the duke's deliberations upon the crisis, and the duty of government respecting it, were stated at length in an unpublished manuscript, which he left in his own handwriting, and is probably a copy of the memorandum sent to the king. The substance of this document is given by Mr. Gleig, in his "Life of Wellington." It is not less interesting than the reflections of Mr. Peel. Both show the workings of anxious and honest minds—the minds of great statesmen, influenced solely by a sense of public duty. The following is the substance of the duke's reflections:—

"The government, if it should determine under existing circumstances to maintain the statutes excluding Roman catholics from power must ask for new laws, the old having quite broken down. They must bring in a bill requiring candidates for seats in parliament to take at the hustings the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; otherwise they could not prevent Roman catholics from contesting every vacant county and borough in the United Kingdom, and from becoming *ipso facto* members of parliament, should constituencies see fit to elect them. Practically speaking, there might be small risk that either in England or Scotland this result would follow—at least, to any extent. But what was to be expected in Ireland? That every constituency, with the exception, perhaps, of the university and city of Dublin, and of the counties and boroughs of the north, would, whenever the opportunity offered, return Roman catholics; and that the members so returned being prevented from taking their seats, three-fourths, at least, of the Irish people must remain permanently unrepresented in parliament. Was it possible, looking to the state of parties in the house of commons, that such a measure, if proposed, could be carried? For many years back the majorities in favour of repeal had gone on increasing, session after session. Even the present parliament, elected as it had been under a strong protestant pressure, had swerved from its faithfulness. The small majority which threw out lord John Russell's bill in 1827 had been converted, in 1828, into a minority; and among those who voted on that occasion with Mr. Peel, many gave him warning that hereafter they should consider themselves free to follow a different course.

"But perhaps it might be possible to get a bill passed to disfranchise the Irish forty shilling freeholders—a class of voters who, as they had been created for acknowledged purposes of corruption in the Irish parliament, would have nobody to stand up for them in high places, now that they refused to play their patrons' game. This was quite as improbable an issue as the other. The disfranchisement of forty shilling freeholders had, indeed, been talked of in former years; but, if effected at all, it was to be in connection with a measure of catholic emancipation. To propose it now for the avowed purpose of rendering catholic emancipation impossible would be to insure the rejection of the bill. That plan, therefore, fell at once to the ground; and there remained but two others.

"The minister might ask parliament for power to suspend the habeas corpus act, and to place all Ireland under military law. To ask for less would be ridiculous; because the act against unlawful assemblies had failed, and, on account of its helplessness, was suffered to expire. Now,

would parliament grant such extensive powers to any government merely that the government might be enabled to debar his majesty's Roman catholic subjects a little longer from enjoying equal political privileges with protestants? The issue was very doubtful—perhaps it was not doubtful at all. Parliament would never grant such powers. But, assuming that the powers were given, what must follow?—a general insurrection, to be put down after much bloodshed and suffering, and then a return to that state of sullen discontent which would render Ireland ten times more than she had ever been, a millstone round the neck of Great Britain, and by-and-by, when military law ceased, and the same measure of personal liberty was granted to Irishmen which the natives of England and Scotland enjoyed, a renewal of agitation, only in a more hostile spirit, and the necessity of either reverting again and again to measures of coercion, or of yielding at last what, upon every principle of humanity and common sense, ought not to have been thus far withheld. But the minister, if the existing parliament refused to give him the powers which he asked, might dissolve, and go to the country with a strong protestant cry; and this cry might serve his purpose in England and Scotland. Doubtless; but what would occur in Ireland?—the return of Roman catholic members in the proportion of four to one over protestants, and the virtual disfranchisement thereby of four-fifths of the Irish people. Would Ireland submit quietly to any law carried against herself in a house of commons so constituted? Was it not much more probable that a dissolution would only lead to the same results which had been shown to be inevitable in the event of the existing parliament acquiescing in the ministers' views? And was there not, at all events, a chance that the electors, even, of England and Scotland, might refuse to abet a policy so pregnant with danger to themselves and to the commonwealth? But why move at all? Mr. O'Connell had been elected by the priests and rabble of Clare to represent them in parliament. Let him retain this empty honour; or, better still, let him be summoned by a call of the house to the bar, and, on his refusal to take the oath, issue a new writ, and go to a new election. In the first place, Mr. O'Connell could not be forced to attend to a call of the house, such call being obligatory only on members chosen at a general election; and in the next, if he did attend, what then? As soon as the new writ was issued, he would take the field again as a candidate, and again be elected; and so the game would continue to be played, till a dissolution occurred, when all those consequences of which we have elsewhere spoken would inevitably come to pass."

Two courses were now open to the duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel—to resign, in order that emancipation might be carried by the statesmen who had always been its advocates, and who might therefore carry it without any violation of consistency or of their own political principles. It was for not adopting this course that they were exposed to all the odium which they so long endured. But the question was, whether lord Grey or lord Lansdowne could have carried catholic emancipation even with

the aid of the duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel in opposition—could overcome the repugnance of the sovereign and the resistance of the house of lords. It was their decided conviction that they could not, especially with due regard to the safety of the established church. But being convinced that the time had come when the question ought to be settled, the duke examined the second course that was open to him, and embraced it. It was this: that postponing all other considerations to what he believed to be a great public duty, he should himself, as prime minister, endeavour to settle the question.

Sir Robert Peel has been even more severely censured than the duke of Wellington for the part he took on this memorable occasion. He wrote a long letter to the duke, in which he earnestly protested against taking charge of the Emancipation Bill in the house of commons, offering, at the same time, to give it his earnest support. He had also offered to resign, as a means of removing one obstacle to the adjustment which the interests of the country demanded. The letter concluded as follows: "I do not merely volunteer my retirement at whatever may be the most convenient time, I do not merely give you the promise that out of office (be the sacrifices that I foresee, private and public, what they may) I will cordially co-operate with you in the settlement of this question, and cordially support your government; but I add to this my decided and deliberate opinion that it will tend to the satisfactory adjustment of the question if the originating of it in the house of commons and the general superintendence of its progress be committed to other hands than mine." And in his "Memoirs" he remarks: "Twenty years have elapsed since the above letter was written. I read it now with the full testimony of my own heart and conscience to the perfect sincerity of the advice which I then gave, and the declarations which I then made; with the same testimony, also, to the fact that that letter was written with a clear foresight of the penalties to which the course I resolved to take would expose me—the rage of party, the rejection by the university of Oxford, the alienation of private friends, the interruption of family affections. Other penalties, such as the loss of office and of royal favour, I would not condescend to notice if they were not the heaviest in the estimation of vulgar and low-minded men, incapable of appreciating higher motives of public conduct. My judgment may be erroneous. From the deep interest I have in the result (though now only so far as future fame is concerned), it cannot be impartial; yet, surely, I do not err in believing that when the various circumstances on which my decision was taken are calmly and dispassionately considered—the state of political parties—the recent discussions in parliament—the result of the Clare election, and the prospects which it opened—the earnest representations and emphatic warnings of the chief governor of Ireland—the evils, rapidly increasing, of divided counsels in the cabinet, and of conflicting decisions in the two houses of parliament—the necessity for some systematic and vigorous course of policy in respect to Ireland—the impossibility, even if it were wise, that that policy should be one of coercion—surely, I do not err in believing that I shall not hereafter be condemned for

having heedlessly and precipitously, still less for having dishonestly and treacherously, counselled the attempt to adjust the long litigated question, that had for so many years precluded the cordial co-operation of public men, and had left Ireland the arena for fierce political conflicts, annually renewed, without the means of authoritative interposition on the part of the crown. The following memorandum, which accompanied my letter of the 11th of August, is the commentary upon that which had been sent by the duke and returned by me. The latter has no doubt been preserved by the duke. The general tenor of the suggestions which it contained may be inferred from my remarks upon them."

Such was the stern logic of facts, such the imperative requirements of events, which compelled one of the most firm-minded and courageous men of his age, and one of the most decided and strong-willed of conservative statesmen, to succumb to the power of popular agitation. The Clare election was the harsh prelude to catholic emancipation and civil equality.

CHAPTER XIV.

Disturbed State of Ireland—Military Organisation of the Peasantry—John Lawless at Ballyhay—The Brunswick Clubs—Protestants of Ulster—Perplexity of the Government—Conduct of Lord Anglesea—Apprehensions of Rebellion—Mr. O'Connell's 'Moral Force'—Rationale of Agitation—The Order of "Liberators"—Exclusive Dealing—Celtic Organisation—Mr. Dawson, of Derry, counsels "Surrender;" he is burnt in Effigy—The Brunswickers eager for War—The Penenden Heath Meeting—Mr. Sheil's Speech—The Catholic Association—The Leinster Declaration—Weakness of the Moderate Party in Ireland—Banquet to Lord Morpeth on his Visit to Dublin—The Duke of Wellington's Letter to Primate Curtis—Reply of the Viceroy; difference between him and the Premier—Complaints of the latter regarding the Irish Administration—Lord Anglesea's spirited Defence; his Recall; his parting Advice to the Roman Catholics—Lord Eldon's Account of the King's Distress about Emancipation—The English Bishops hostile to Catholic Emancipation—Sir Robert Peel's Statement of the Difficulties in the Way—The King consents to have Emancipation made a Cabinet Question.

THE state of Ireland continued to excite the greatest alarm from the prerogation of parliament to the end of the year. The language of the speakers in the association became more violent, and the harangues of the priests more inflammatory. In the counties of Tipperary and Limerick large bodies of men were accustomed to assemble on Sundays, and to parade in military order, carrying banners. These bands were regularly organised and admirably commanded. The Irish government, from time to time, reported the progress of this formidable organisation. In one place as many as 700 "cavalry" would assemble, with thousands of infantry, and go through military evolutions. These were surrounded by thousands of the peasantry. Amongst the persons thus paraded were some of the most abandoned characters in the country, men who had notoriously been concerned in the perpetration of murder, and for the apprehension of whom large rewards had been offered in vain by the government. These demonstrations, as might be expected, excited the greatest alarm among the protestants of the south, as well as the peaceably disposed Roman catholics. One ominous circumstance connected with them was the fact that the dissuasions of the priests against the meetings in military array were disregarded. Mr. Lawless, an active member of the association, marched

northward at the head of 10,000 Roman catholics. In the county of Monaghan, the Orangemen, apprised of their approach, took possession of the town of Ballyhay in large numbers, prepared to encounter the southern invaders of Ulster. As the Orangemen were well armed, and excited to the utmost, a bloody battle would have ensued, had not Lawless beaten a timely retreat. Getting out of his carriage, and mounting a swift horse, he galloped off, amidst the indignant shouts of his followers.

The formidable organisation of the Roman catholics led to a counter organisation of the protestants, in the form of Brunswick clubs. This organisation embraced the whole of the protestant peasantry, north and south, the protestant farmers, and many of the gentry. They, too, held their regular meetings, had their exciting oratory, and passed strong resolutions, condemnatory of the inaction of the government, which was charged with neglecting its first and most imperative duty—the protection of society from lawless violence. The Brunswickers, as well as the emancipators, had their "rent," to bear the expenses of the agitation. They alleged that they were obliged to organise in self-defence, and in defence of the constitution. In Ulster, the country was divided into two camps, catholic and protestant. Notwithstanding the difference in numbers, the protestants of Ulster were eager to encounter their antagonists in the field, and had not the slightest doubt of being able to beat them. They had all the proud confidence of a dominant race, and regarded the military pretensions of their antagonists as scornfully as the Turks would regard similar pretensions on the part of the Greeks. The state of feeling on both sides was such, that an aggression upon the protestants in the south would have called forth 100,000 armed men in the north; and an aggression upon the catholics in Ulster would have produced a similar effect among the catholics at Munster. The number of protestants in favour of emancipation constituted but a small minority. The great mass were against concession. They believed that an insurrection would be the most satisfactory solution of the difficulty. With the aid of the army, they felt that they were able to crush the "papists," as they had been crushed in 1798, and then they hoped they would be quiet, for at least another generation, resuming what they considered their proper position as "sole-leather." They forgot, however, the increase in their numbers, their property, and their intelligence. They forgot the growth of a middle class amongst them; the increased power and influence of the hierarchy, and the formidable band of agitators supplied by the Roman catholic bar, whose members, many of them men of commanding abilities and large practice, were excluded by their creed from the bench; which exclusion filled the minds of the ambitious with a burning sense of wrong, and made it their interest to devise all possible modes of evading the law, while keeping the country on the verge of insurrection.

So successful were they in this endeavour, that the government was in a state of the greatest possible perplexity. Lord Anglesea, the viceroy, and lord Leveson Gower, the chief secretary, were in continual correspondence with the home secretary, as to the propriety of adopting



A SUNDAY PARADE IN TIPPERARY.

measures of repression. Lord Anglesea was decided in his conviction that emancipation ought to be immediately granted. He was naturally reluctant to employ force, unless it was imperatively necessary, and then he felt with Mr. Peel that it ought to be used effectively, whatever might be the consequences. Neither the Irish nor the English government concealed from itself what those consequences would probably be—namely, an open rebellion, a sanguinary civil war; which, however, they had no doubt of being able to put down. The law officers of the crown, both in England and Ireland, were called upon for their opinions as to the illegality of the proceedings of the

that he sometimes did and said things which made the agitators believe that they had his countenance and support. For example, he went on a visit to lord Cloncurry, who, though a protestant, was a member of the Catholic Association, and who a few days after entertaining the representative of the king, attended a meeting of that body. The excuse of lord Anglesea was, that lord Cloncurry went for the purpose of preventing the passing of a resolution in favour of exclusive dealing. The opinion of the English government was shared by Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald and many other liberal statesmen who sympathised with the irritation of the Irish protestants at the supineness



VIEW OF LONDONDERRY.

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agitators, as to the likelihood of success in case of prosecution, and whether the government would be warranted, by statute or common law, in dispersing the popular assemblages by force. They agreed on both sides of the channel that the case was not sufficiently clear to justify the government either in legal proceedings or military repression. The English law officers came to this conclusion, although at the time Sir Charles Wetherell was attorney-general. It is evident, however, from the tone of the correspondence published by Sir Robert Peel's executors, that the home secretary was far from being satisfied with the conduct of lord Anglesea. It was believed that he did not always act with sufficient discretion, and

of the Irish executive. Looking at the state of things at this distance of time, every impartial person must agree that Sir Robert Peel was right. He had urged the propriety of issuing a proclamation by the lord-lieutenant in council, warning the people against assembling in large bodies in military array, as exciting alarm in the public mind, and threatening to disturb the peace. When at last lord Anglesea was induced to adopt this course, it proved successful. The agitators became cowed and cautious, and it was quite evident that nothing was further from their wishes than to come to blows, either with the troops or the Brunswickers. Thus, in November, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald wrote to Mr. Peel: "The sentiment is universal of dis-

gust, indignation, and alarm, at the proceedings of lord Anglesea's government, and at the tone of his partisans and his press. Whether the collision will happen so soon as is contemplated I know not. I rather think not. The association is frightened; and if the demonstrations of the south are interrupted, and Mr. Lawless's progress in the west be not persevered in, it is possible, and it is to be hoped, that the hostile parties may not come to an effusion of blood. But can we read the reports of the meetings that are taking place and expect that before the winter is over, the gentry of the country, emancipators as well as Brunswickers, will not call on the government to take a part, and to save us from these horrors?" Mr. Leslie Foster, a leading Irish statesman, wrote in the same month: "Depend upon it, let parliament do what they may, the catholics will not rebel. Their leaders are more deeply convinced than you are of the utter and immediate ruin that would be the result of any insurrectionary movement; and in every rank among them, down to the lowest, there is a due fear of the power of England, the facilities of a steam invasion, the character of the duke, and not least, perhaps above all, the readiness of the Ulster protestants for battle. It is further to be borne in mind that in no period within our memory was the condition of the people so rapidly improving, or their employment so great, as at the present moment; and there is a real, substantial disinclination in consequence, amongst all ranks above the mere rabble, to hazard any course that would involve the country in confusion."

Mr. O'Connell's avowed principle of action was "moral force." He was in the constant habit of asserting that "the man who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy;" and that no political advantages, however great, should be obtained at the expense of "one drop of Christian blood." Nevertheless, the letters which he was in the habit of addressing to "the people of Ireland," and which were remarkable for their clearness, force, and emphatic tautology, had always prefixed to them, as a standing motto, Byron's couplet—

"Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not

Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?"

There is no doubt that his great object was through life to inspire his Roman catholic countrymen with a consciousness of their physical power, supplanting the slavish spirit that had been inspired by the penal code. He was accustomed to say that for every shilling of "rent" there was a man, and the man could grasp a weapon, and put forth a power that slumbered in his right arm. In fact, this mighty political conjuror produced all his spells by invoking this phantom of physical force; nor did he invoke it in vain, for it was that phantom that ultimately terrified the most determined supporters of protestant ascendancy into the surrender of the principle of civil equality. The Catholic Association, in its origin, was treated with contempt, and even catholics themselves spoke of it with derision; but as it proceeded in its operations, the speeches that were weekly delivered produced an effect which daily increased. The catholic aristocrat was made to feel "that his ancient blood, which slavery had made stagnant in his veins, was of no avail; the catholic merchant was taught

that his coffers filled with gold could not impart to him any substantial importance, when every needy corporator looked down upon him from the pedestal of his aristocratic religion; the catholic priest was informed that he had much occasion to put the lessons of humility inculcated by the Gospel into practice, when every coxcomb minister of the establishment could, with impunity, put some sacerdotal affront upon him. In short, from the proudest nobleman down to the meanest serf, the whole body of Roman catholics were rendered sensible of their inferior posture in the state. The stigma was pointed at—men became exasperated at their grievances when they were roused to their perception; a mirror was held up to Ireland, and when she beheld the brand upon her forehead, it began to burn. Reviled as the catholic demagogues have been, still did they not accomplish great things when they succeeded in marshalling and bringing the whole population of the country into array? The English people had been previously taught to hold the Irish catholics in contempt; but when they saw that such an immense population was actuated by one indignant sentiment, and was combined in an impassioned, but not the less effectual, organisation, and, above all, when they perceived £1,000 a-week pouring into the exchequer, their alarm was excited, and, although their pride was wounded, they ceased to despise where they had begun to fear. The wonders which were achieved in Waterford, in Armagh, in Monaghan, and in Louth, may be referred to the system of energy which had been adopted. "We are not, after all," said Mr. Sheil, "like the captives of Calcutta, who were allowed to perish rather than that the rajah should be awakened from his sleep. Let not the ministers expect to slumber on undisturbed by the wrongs and unaroused by the cries of Ireland. Ireland shall thunder at, though she may not be able to break open, their doors, till the ministers shall themselves exclaim, 'Wake, England, with this knocking!' We must keep perpetually in view the necessity of adapting ourselves to the passions of the Irish, as well as of soothing the prejudices of the English people. This never should be lost sight of; and those who are most inclined to censure our conduct, and are sometimes at a loss to account for our violence, as it is called, will find, in this simple remark, the obvious clue to our policy. Whatever we do, men will always be found to cavil at our proceedings; and this being the inevitable consequence of whatever course we pursue, I prefer the bold and manly system to the base and servile, which would equally supply arguments against our course. If I am to be treated like a dog, I had rather be chained up as a furious hound, than beaten like a well-bred spaniel, and repaid with blows for my sycophancy and fawning. But, independently of the superior manliness of taking a bold and determined course, and of calling the attention of the whole empire—and, I may add, of the world—to the oppression of the Irish catholics, which is so disgraceful to the English nation, and makes all Europe cry out 'Shame!' the more honourable is also, I have no doubt, the wisest course. Nothing but the permanent exigency of concession will produce it. It is for us to generate that exigency. How is that to be effected? By rousing, consolidating, and

organising the energies of the people. There are many—aye, and in our own body—who tell us that we should approach the legislature in a base and servile attitude, as if Ireland should be fearful lest the reiteration of her complaints should weary the honourable house; and she should preface her supplications with an apology for her intrusion. Let me not be told of the pride of the English people. If they are proud, they will eventually respect us the more for adopting a little of their own character and demeanour. The tone and the attitude of Ireland should correspond with her increasing importance and power. She should stand at the bar of the legislature erect and independent, and, stretching forth her vigorous and gigantic arm, she should remind her oppressors of the infraction of treaties, of the breach of contracts, of the violation of all right, of the outrage upon all honour; and, having demonstrated her injuries, having disclosed all her wrongs, having torn open her bosom, if I may so say, and shown the hideous cancer of faction, eating to the heart, and corroding the life and substance of her being, she should tell them that she will be eventually as strong as she is miserable, and exclaim, Do me justice—rescue me from wretchedness and from distraction—give me back my liberty—raise me to the place I should maintain in the empire—give me back my spoliated rights—restore me to my violated franchises—give me back my liberty, or— I pause upon the brink of the alternative to which I had hurried, and, receding from it, leave it to you to complete the sentence.”*

Shortly before the Clare election, Mr. O’Connell established the order of “Liberators,” as a mode of expressing the gratitude and confidence of the people for past services. Its objects were to prevent the formation or continuance of secret societies; to conciliate all classes in one bond of brotherhood and affection, “so that all religious animosities may cease among Irishmen;” to bury in total and eternal oblivion all ancient animosities and reproaches; to prevent feuds and riots, and faction fights at fairs, markets, and patrons; to promote the collection of a national fund for national purposes; to protect voters from the vengeance of their landlords, and to watch over their registration; “to promote the system of dealing exclusively with the friends of civil and religious liberty, protestant and catholic, with the selection, where choice can be made, of protestant friends being the most disinterested of the two; also, to prevent, as much as possible, all dealing with the enemies of Ireland, whether protestant, Orangemen, or Orange catholics, the worst of all Orangists; to promote the exclusive use of articles the growth and manufacture of Ireland.”

The system of exclusive dealing thus recommended was a system of social corruption and social persecution. While the attempt to serve Ireland by the exclusive use of articles of Irish produce only showed Mr. O’Connell’s ignorance of political economy. The system, however, was soon abandoned.

The impression among the Roman catholics after the Clare election was, that emancipation was virtually won.

So strong was the feeling of exultation that immediately after the catholic rent reached the sum of £2,704 in one week; the next week it was £1,427; and though it soon after went to £500 a week, it showed the strength of the popular enthusiasm. Liberator clubs were established in every part of the country. They were branches of the association; but each had its own peculiar organisation, its internal management, and its working committees. By means of this machinery the whole population of the country could be moved at any moment, and in any direction. This is a very remarkable fact, taken in connection with the theory of the impulsive and fickle character of the Celtic race, their averseness to order and method, and the difficulty of getting them to pursue any course systematically. O’Connell, a man of Celtic blood, was one of the greatest methodisers of his day; and there is scarcely an example in history of any popular leader having wrought an oppressed race, consisting of six millions of people, always prone to division, into an organisation so compact that he could wield the fierce democracy at his will, and bid defiance to the most powerful state in the world to suppress the voluntary system of government he had established. This is, perhaps, the most singular and instructive fact in the whole career of the great agitator.

An impression got abroad, soon after the Clare election, that the duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel were wavering on the catholic question; and in the month of August following a profound sensation was produced by a speech made by Mr. Dawson, one of the members for Londonderry. Mr. Dawson was the brother-in-law of the home secretary. The latter represented Oxford university, having beaten Canning out of the field, as the champion of protestant ascendancy. The former represented the greatest stronghold of protestantism in Ireland, the very last of all its constituencies to tolerate a departure from its own inspiring watchword, “No surrender.” Mr. Dawson had been a most uncompromising antagonist of the catholic claims. We cannot wonder, then, at the startling effect, which ran like an electric shock through the country, when such a man—a member of the government—at a public banquet, in the midst of the local chiefs of conservatism within the walls of Derry, surrounded by all the memorials of the glorious revolution of 1688, pronounced the word “Surrender.” He was described as the “pilot balloon,” to show the direction in which the wind blew in high quarters. His memorable speech on this occasion is part of Irish history and of English history, too; for it referred to matters which had occupied the British parliament for years, and during this year absorbed nearly the whole attention of the cabinet. It had wrecked many an administration, and the present one, with the greatest captain of modern times, was struggling among the breakers.

“I have not stayed here,” said Mr. Dawson, “for a trifling object, such as to drink the glorious memory, or to cheer the ‘prentice boys. It is my duty, as I am here, to state to the meeting my opinion with respect to the catholic question; and I beg the attention of this company to the condition in which, in my opinion, this subject has

* “Sheil’s Speeches,” p. 452.

reduced the country. In place of an exclusive devotion to the business of life, and an industrious pursuit of the professional occupations—the only certain road to wealth and eminence—this question has made every man, from the peer to the peasant, a politician; it is the absorbing topic of every man's discourse, and it is, in consequence, the plentiful parent of exaggerated fears, of unmeasured pretensions, of personal hatred, of religious fury, of political strife, of calumny, of abuse and persecution, such as is not to be found in any other part of the civilised world. No matter what your pursuits, no matter what your disposition may be, the subject pursues you in every part of the country. It is the prevailing topic at your breakfast-table, of your dinner-table, of your supper-table. It is the subject of debate among men; it is the cause of alarm among women. It meets you at the castle of Dublin; it meets you at the house of the country gentleman; it creeps into the courts of justice; it is to be found at the grand jury; it is to be seen at the markets and fairs; it is to be found even at our places of amusement; it meets you wherever you go! Would that the evil ended here! but we may see what the mischief of such a state of things must be in the convulsed state of society, and the annihilation of all those ties upon which the well-being of society depends. The state of Ireland is an anomaly in the history of civilised nations; it has no parallel in ancient or modern history, and, being contrary to the character of all civil institutions, it must terminate in general anarchy and confusion. It is true that we have a government to which outward obedience is shown, which is responsible to parliament and answerable to God for the manner of administering its functions; but it is equally true that an immense majority of the people look up, not to the legitimate government, but to an irresponsible and to a self-constituted association for the administration of the affairs of the country. The peace of Ireland depends not upon the government of the king, but upon that of the Catholic Association. (Loud cries of "More's the shame! Why not put it down?") It has defied the government, and trampled upon the law of the land, and it is beyond contradiction that the same power that banished a cabinet minister from the representation of his county, because he was a minister of the king, can maintain or disturb the peace of the country just as it suits their caprice or ambition. The danger impends over every institution established by law. The church enjoys its dignity, and the clergy enjoy their revenues by the law of the land; but we know not how soon it may please the Catholic Association to issue their anathema against the payment of tithes; and what man is hardy enough to say that the catholic will disobey its mandates? It depends upon the Catholic Association, no man can deny it, whether the clergy are to receive their incomes or not. (Uproar.) The condition of landlords is not more consoling. Already they have been robbed of their influence over their tenantry—already they have become mere cyphers upon their estates; nay, in many places they are worse than cyphers; they have been forced to become the tools of their domineering masters, the catholic priesthood—and it depends upon a single breath, a single resolution of the Catholic Association,

whether the landlords are to be robbed of their rents or not. So perfect a system of organisation was never yet achieved by any body not possessing the legitimate powers of government. It is powerful, it is arrogant—it derides, and it has triumphed over the enactments of the legislature, and is filling its coffers from the voluntary contributions of the people. What I say is, that the Catholic Association, by securing the voluntary contributions of the people, consolidated to itself a power by which it may supply the sinews of war, or undermine, by endless litigation and persecution, the established institutions of the country. Such is the power of this new phenomenon; and I will ask any man has it been slow to exercise its influence? In every place where the catholic population predominates, it is all powerful and irresistible; it has subdued two-thirds of Ireland by its denunciations, more completely than Oliver Cromwell or king William ever subdued the country by the sword. The aristocracy, the clergy, the gentry, are all prostrate before it. In those devoted regions, a perfect abandonment of all the dignity and influence belonging to station and rank seems to have taken place; or, if a struggle be made, as in Clare, it is only to insure the triumph of this daring autocrat. In those parts of Ireland where the protestant and catholic population is pretty equally divided, the same influence is felt, if not in so exaggerated a degree, at least so mischievously, that comfort and security are alike uncertain. Amongst the two classes we see distrust and suspicion, a perfect alienation from each other in sentiment and habit, and an ill-suppressed desire to measure each other's strength by open warfare. The institutions of society are reviled, the predominance of authority is lost, the confidence of the people in the impartiality of the courts of justice is certainly much impaired, the magistracy is condemned or supported as it is supposed to lean to the Orangemen or the Roman catholics, and even trade and barter are regulated by the same unhappy distinctions of religious feeling. Such, gentlemen, is really the true picture of this country—a country possessing every material, by the bounty of God and the intelligence of the natives, to become great, powerful, and wealthy; but in which every hope is blasted and every exertion frustrated by the unhappy dissensions of its inhabitants. And now, gentlemen, it is time to ask ourselves the question, What must be the result of such a disordered state of things, and such a complete overthrow of all the relations of society? Some gentlemen will say, Rebellion; and the sooner it comes the sooner we shall be able to crush it. (Loud cheers, which lasted several minutes.) Now, I entertain a very different opinion. It is not the interest, and I believe it is not the wish, of the Roman catholic leaders to drive the people into rebellion. We have the best security for the purity of their intentions in that respect, in the stake they hold in the country, and in the moral conviction that they would be the first victims of a rebellion. If a rebellion should take place, it will not be from the orders or example of the Roman catholic leaders (hisses), but from the readiness of the two contending parties to come into conflict with each other, and from the total impossibility of checking the ebullition of popular frenzy if the two parties be goaded

and exasperated against each other by inflammatory speeches or exaggerated misrepresentations. But the result will be a state of society far worse than rebellion; it will be a revolution—a revolution, not effected by the sword, but by undermining the institutions of the country, and involving every establishment, civil, political, and religious. There never was a time when the whole catholic body—and it signifies very little whether their numbers be two millions or six millions—there never was a time when the whole body was so completely roused and engrossed by political passions as the present. They found out the value of union; they had put in practice the secret of combination; they feel a confidence in the support of numbers; they have laid prostrate the pomp and power of wealth; they have contended against the influence of authority and the decrees of the legislature; they have enjoyed an easy triumph over both.”

Thus, there was a complete accordance between Mr. Sheil, the eloquent and audacious agitator, and Mr. Dawson, one of the ablest and most loyal ministers of the crown, as to the victorious power of the Catholic Association. But to have its triumphs thus proclaimed on the very spot where protestant ascendancy had been established 250 years before, and which had ever since remained its greatest stronghold, was more than could be borne by men who had just been drinking with enthusiasm “The glorious, pious, and immortal memory” of William III. Mr. Dawson was, therefore, reviled and execrated; he was burned in effigy, and for years his name was almost as odious to the Orangemen as Lundy, the traitor. Hitherto, the agitation on both sides had been little better than child’s-play. The protestant party rested satisfied in the persuasion that “the constitution in church and state” was safe in the keeping of a thoroughly conservative government—a house of lords which would not change the laws of England, and a sovereign who would not violate his coronation oath. But when they found their standard-bearers fainting, and their most trusted commanders parleying with the enemy, their exasperation knew no bounds. The Brunswickers were now terribly in earnest. Their blood was up, and they longed for the arbitrament of the sword.

The agitation extended to England, where also the “no popery” cry was effectually raised. The duke of Newcastle, lord Winchelsea, and lord Kenyon led the way in the formation of Brunswick clubs. A great demonstration was got up on Penenden Heath—a monster meeting of English Brunswickers. To counteract its effects, it was determined that some of the leading advocates of the catholic cause, being freeholders of Kent, should go to the meeting. Among those who attended were lord Darnley, Mr. Cobbett, sergeant Shée, and Mr. Sheil; but none of them could obtain a hearing. Mr. Sheil had come prepared with a grand speech, carefully written out, as was his custom, and committed to memory, but not so strictly as to exclude such extemporaneous additions as might be necessary to adapt the oration to the actual circumstances. When he arrived at the meeting, the reporter from the *Sun* asked him for his manuscript, which he gave, with the understanding that he must make it correspond with his

speech as delivered. The reporter, taking it for granted that it would be delivered all right, made all possible haste to get it into type. The speech appeared *in extenso*; but it unfortunately happened that, owing to the uproar and continued interruptions, it was not delivered. The circumstance became the subject of universal remark, and elicited comments by no means flattering to the Irish orator. The speech, however, was as able as any he had ever delivered. It consisted chiefly of an elaborate defence of the Roman catholic church from the charge of persecution. It admitted that it did persecute like every other church when in power; but that it was an incident of its establishment, not the natural result of its spirit and principles.

In the meantime, the Catholic Association was pursuing its work with increasing vigour and determination. It resolved thenceforth to support no candidate who should not pledge himself to oppose every government that did not make emancipation a cabinet measure. Provincial meetings were held in Clonmel, Kilkenny, and Mullingar; the chair at the last place being occupied by the marquis of Westmeath. Between the two extreme parties there were many moderate men, of high social position, anxious for something like a compromise. Some of these were in confidential communication with lord Anglesea’s government, and it was thought desirable to establish a liberal platform, with a view to moderate the violence of catholics and Brunswickers. It was with this object that Mr. Pierce Mahony got up the celebrated “Leinster declaration,” so called from the signature of Ireland’s only duke. But the experiment served only to reveal the weakness of the moderate party, for after lying for signature in Latouche’s bank for two months, only forty-two names were attached to it within that period. When, however, the struggle between the two parties was on the point of having a bloody issue, the alarm spread through the ranks of moderate men on both sides, and the document rapidly received signatures. The declaration set forth that the disqualifying laws which affected Roman catholics were productive of consequences prejudicial in the highest degree to the interests of Ireland—the primary cause of her poverty—the source of political discontents and religious animosities—destructive alike of social happiness and national prosperity. Unless the legislature should speedily apply a remedy to those evils, they must in their rapid progression assume such a character as would, perhaps, render their removal impossible. It was stated, therefore, to be a matter of paramount importance that the whole subject should be taken into immediate consideration by parliament, “with a view to such a final conciliatory adjustment as may be conducive to the peace and strength of the United Kingdom, to the stability of our national institutions, and to the general satisfaction and concord of all classes of his majesty’s subjects.”

As winter approached the state of things assumed a more portentous aspect. The leading agitators were themselves dismayed when they looked down the precipice to the edge of which they had brought the nation. They were therefore exceedingly anxious that the liberal protestants should take an active part as mediators, in order,

if possible, to avert a disastrous collision. A good occasion was offered by the visit of lord Morpeth to Ireland. This enlightened and accomplished nobleman, always the friend of civil and religious liberty, destined to preside over the government of Ireland, as viceroy, when the *régime* of civil equality was fully established, and to be the congenial interpreter of its spirit—was then invited to a great banquet, which was attended by all the leading friends of civil and religious liberty in and about Dublin, protestant and catholic. The duke of Leinster was in the chair, and Mr. Sheil appealed to him, in the most eloquent terms, by all that was patriotic and glorious in the history of his ancestors the Geraldines—which for seven hundred years formed a great part of the history of Ireland, and who were in past times considered more Irish than the Irish themselves—to put himself at the head of the liberal party, to take the helm, and steer the vessel through the breakers that threatened to engulf it.

Dr. Curtis, the Roman catholic primate, was an old friend of the duke of Wellington, whom he had known during the war in the Peninsula, and with whom he had kept up a confidential correspondence on the subject of the catholic claims, on the state of the country, on the disposition of the Roman catholics in the army, and other matters of the kind. Many of the duke's letters to the venerable archbishop have been recently found among the papers of the latter, and are now in possession of Mr. William J. Fitzpatrick, J.P., author of the "Life and Times of the Right Reverend Dr. Doyle." On the 11th of December the duke wrote to Dr. Curtis as follows:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 4th instant, and I assure you that you do me justice in believing that I am sincerely anxious to witness the settlement of the Roman catholic question; which, by benefiting the state, would confer a benefit on every individual belonging to it. But I confess that I see no prospect of such a settlement. Party has been mixed up with the consideration of the question to such a degree, and such violence pervades every discussion of it, that it is impossible to expect to prevail upon men to consider it dispassionately. If we could bury it in oblivion for a short time, and employ that time diligently in the consideration of its difficulties on all sides (for they are very great), I should not despair of seeing a satisfactory remedy.—Believe me, my dear sir, ever your most faithful humble servant,

"WELLINGTON."

After the reports that had gone abroad, to the effect that the government were about to settle the question, and that they had even prepared a bill on the subject, this letter from the prime minister to the Roman catholic primate was most disappointing. Besides, it was absurd to expect that the subject could be buried in oblivion. The duke, no doubt, had in his mind the difficulty with the king, and the excitement of protestant feeling in England, which was exasperated by the violence of the debates in the Catholic Association, and the tone of menace and defiance which that body had assumed. This obstacle was not lessened by the letter in question, the purport of which was communicated to Mr. O'Connell, and also to the lieutenant. The latter wrote an admirable letter in reply,

which led to serious consequences. On the 22nd of December Dr. Curtis sent him the duke's letter, and a copy of his own answer to it. He acknowledged that it conveyed information which he had not himself received, though entitled, from his position, to receive it first. He then frankly offered his opinion as to the course which it behoved the catholics to pursue. He was perfectly convinced that the final and cordial settlement of the question could alone give peace, harmony, and prosperity to all classes of his majesty's subjects. He advised that the duke of Wellington should by every means be propitiated; for if any man could carry the measure, it was he. All personal and offensive insinuations should therefore be suppressed, and ample allowance should be made for the difficulties of his situation. "Difficult," said lord Anglesea, "it certainly is; for he has to overcome the very strong prejudices and the interested motives of many persons of the highest influence, as well as allay the real alarm of many of the more ignorant protestants." As to burying in oblivion the question for a short time, the viceroy considered the thing utterly impossible, and, if possible, not at all desirable. He recommended, on the contrary, that all constitutional means should be used to forward the cause, coupled with the utmost forbearance, and the most submissive obedience to the law. Personality offered no advantage. It offended those who could assist, and confirmed predisposed aversion. "Let the catholic," said his lordship, "trust to the justice of his cause, and to the growing liberality of mankind. Unfortunately, he has lost some friends, and fortified enemies, during the last six months, by unwearied and unnecessary violence. Brute force, he should be assured, can effect nothing. It is the legislature that must decide this great question, and my anxiety is that it should be met by the parliament under the most favourable circumstances, and that the opposers of catholic emancipation shall be disarmed by the patient forbearance as well as by the unwearied perseverance of its advocates."

This letter, though marked "private and confidential," was, like the duke's letter to the same prelate, made public, and became the subject of comment in the association and in the press, which tended still more to embarrass the question, by irritating the king and the duke, and furnishing exciting topics to the enemies of the catholic cause. The marquis of Anglesea, indeed, from the time he went to Ireland, held the strongest language to the government as to the necessity of carrying the measure. At a subsequent period he expressed a wish that his opinions should be made fully known to the king and his ministers, because they could then better judge of his fitness for carrying into effect the measures they might decide upon adopting. On the 31st of July he wrote:—"I will exert myself to keep the country quiet, and put down rebellion under any circumstances; but I will not consent to govern this country much longer under the existing law."

There was a radical difference in spirit between the viceroy and the premier. The former sympathised warmly with the Roman catholics in their struggles for civil equality, feeling deeply the justice of their cause. The duke, on the other hand, yielded only to necessity, and thought of concession not as a matter of principle, but of expediency;

he yielded, not because it was right to do so, but because it was preferable to having a civil war. The feeling of Mr. Peel was somewhat similar; it was with him, also, a choice of evils, and he chose the least. This difference of sentiment produced much dissatisfaction in the cabinet. Messrs. Steele and O'Gorman Mahon were both magistrates, and yet they were actively engaged in exciting the people to the very highest pitch, and urging them to defy the constituted authorities. On a day when a riot was expected at Ennis, county Clare, and the high sheriff made preparations to prevent it, both these gentlemen appeared there, decorated with the order of "Liberators,"

that a formidable conspiracy exists; and that the supposed conspirators—those whose language and conduct point them out as the principal agitators of the country—are admitted to the presence of his majesty's representative, and equally well received with the king's most loyal subjects." The duke also, as we have already observed, strongly censured the conduct of the viceroy and the lord-chancellor for visiting lord Cloncurry, a member of the association, remarking, "The doubts which are entertained respecting the loyalty of the Roman Catholic Association, the language which has been held there respecting the king himself, his royal family, the members of his govern-



THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE.

and followed by a mob. Mr. O'Gorman Mahon held very improper language to the high sheriff, in presence of the troops. All this was certified by sixteen magistrates, and by the commanding officer; yet lord Anglesea, with the advice of the lord chancellor, decided on not depriving them of the commission of the peace. This conduct greatly disappointed the duke of Wellington, and, on the 11th of November, he wrote a strong letter to him, in which he said: "I cannot express to you adequately the extent of the difficulties which these and other occurrences in Ireland create in all discussions with his majesty. He feels that in Ireland the public peace is violated every day with impunity by those whose duty it is to preserve it;

ment, your colleagues in office, and respecting nearly every respectable member of society, and the unanimously-expressed detestation of the violence of the association, might be deemed reasons for omitting to encourage any of its members by the countenance or favour of the king's representative."

Lord Anglesea replied to these sharp rebukes with great spirit. "Up to this moment," he said, "I have been left entirely in ignorance, not only as to your intentions with regard to this country, but also as to your sentiments regarding my policy. They are now developed, and I shall know how to act." He then entered into details of all the occurrences alluded to, in order to show "how entirely his

majesty had been misinformed." Having done so, he added: "If those who arraign my conduct will obtain information from an uninterested source, I feel the most perfect confidence that I shall obtain the applause of my sovereign, and the good will and good opinion of his majesty's ministers with whom I serve." He denied that the government had lost its power, that the association had usurped its functions, or that the laws were set at defiance. He asserted, on the contrary, that the law was in full vigour; and if it authorised, or expediency demanded, the suppression of the Catholic Association and of the Brunswick clubs, and the disarming of the yeomanry at the same time, he would undertake to effect it almost without the loss of a life. But he did not think such a course expedient, and he deprecated the teasing system of attacking every minor offence, of which the issue upon trial would be doubtful, and which would produce irritation, without effecting a salutary lesson and permanent good." He had no object, he said, in holding his post but that of pleasing his king and serving his country: and if, in his zealous and unwearied efforts to effect the latter object, he had incurred the displeasure of the king and lost the confidence of his tenants, he ought not to remain in Ireland. He was therefore ready to depart whenever they found it convenient to recall him. The duke became testy under this resistance and antagonism. In replying to the last letter, he becomes more personal in his accusations. "I might," said the premier, "at an earlier period have expressed the pain I felt at the attendance of gentlemen of your household, and even of your family, at the Roman Catholic Association. I could not but feel that such attendance must expose your government to misconstruction. I was silent because it was painful to mention such things; but I have always felt that if these impressions upon the king's mind should remain—and I must say that recent transactions have given fresh cause for them—I could not avoid mentioning them to you in a private communication, and to let you know the embarrassment which they occasion."

The viceroy rejoined with unabated spirit, replying to all the fresh matter introduced by the duke in a lofty tone of self-justification. There is caustic irony in the following allusion to the king, as an apology for his conciliatory policy:—"I have, in fact, been most anxious to imitate, so far as my humble faculties would permit, the example of his majesty himself during his visit to Ireland, and have scrupulously attended to the king's benign and paternal admonition, when his majesty quitted the kingdom, to inculcate good fellowship and cordiality among all classes, and to promote conciliation." It is dangerous to use the *argumentum ad hominem* with a king—still more so to make his conduct the object of sarcastic allusions; and it was evident that lord Anglesea could not long remain in the position of a representative of his majesty. There was certainly an animosity against him in the highest quarters, which appeared in the construction put upon the accidental dropping in of his son and some of his household, from curiosity, to witness, as they thought unnoticed, the debates of the association—a circumstance which he had long ago explained, and with which he thought it particularly unfair that he should be now upbraided.

This memorable controversy between the prime minister and the lord lieutenant of Ireland, exhibiting a painful conflict of opinion and feeling between the two personages more particularly charged with the government of the country in the midst of a dangerous crisis, was brought to a close by a letter from the duke of Wellington, on the 28th of December. The following is a copy:—

"London, December 28, 1828.

"MY DEAR LORD ANGLESEA,—I have been very sensible, since I received your last letter, that the correspondence which that letter terminated had left us in a relation towards each other which ought not to exist between the lord-lieutenant and the king's minister, and could not continue to exist without great inconvenience and injury to the king's service. I refrained from acting upon this feeling till I should be able to consult with my colleagues, and I took the earliest opportunity which the return to town of those who were absent afforded to obtain their opinion, which concurred with my own. Under these circumstances, having taken the king's pleasure upon the subject, his majesty has desired me to inform you that he intends to relieve you from the government of Ireland. I will shortly notify the arrangements which will become necessary in consequence.

"Believe me, ever yours most sincerely,
(Signed)

"WELLINGTON.

"His excellency the marquis of Anglesea, K.G."

The marquis answered that he had received his letter, informing him of the king's intention to release him from the government of Ireland, and that he held himself in readiness to obey his majesty's commands the moment he received them. He did receive them, on the 10th of January, in a formal letter of recall from the home secretary.

The removal of this popular and "chivalrous" viceroy caused universal expressions of grief among the Roman catholic party. In the association, O'Connell and Sheil spoke in the most glowing terms of his character and his administration. He quitted Ireland on the 19th of January, 1829, followed from the castle gates to the pier at Kingstown by an immense concourse of people. "It was a magnificent display," says a historian of the time—"full of cordial feeling, of enthusiasm, and gratitude. Alas! for the fickleness of human affairs! We shall shortly witness the same nobleman again lord-lieutenant, and then one of the most unpopular of men!"* In a letter to Dr. Curtis, lord Anglesea gave an extraordinary parting advice for a chief ruler of Ireland—"Agitate—agitate—agitate!" He was succeeded by the duke of Northumberland—a tory magnate of great wealth, but of no great vigour of intellect or energy of character—a man not at all likely to trouble his chief with controversy about anything. His appointment, however, brought back the conservative aristocracy to the castle, and had a soothing effect on the protestant mind, while his administration was mild towards the other party.

* Fagan's "Life of O'Connell," p. 619.

While these matters were going on in Ireland, Mr. Peel was applying his mind, in the most earnest manner, to the removal of the difficulties that stood in the way of emancipation.

The chief difficulty was the king. At the commencement of the month of January, 1829, his majesty had not yet signified his consent that the whole subject of Ireland, including the catholic question, should be taken into consideration by his confidential servants. In his interview with the duke of Wellington in the course of the autumn, the king had manifested much uneasiness and irritation, and had hitherto shown no disposition to relax the opposition which (of late years, at least) he had manifested to the consideration by his government of the claims of the Roman catholics. In the "Life of Lord Eldon," by Mr. Twiss, are published the memoranda of conversations between the king and lord Eldon, in the months of March and April, 1829, in the course of which the king expresses himself very strongly on this subject, declaring that it was with the utmost pain and reluctance that he had acted upon the advice which he received from his ministers. His majesty is reported by lord Eldon to have said that "he was miserable and wretched, and that his situation was dreadful;" "that if he gave his consent to the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, he would go to the Baths abroad, and from them to Hanover; that he would return no more to England, and that his subjects might get a catholic king in the duke of Clarence." Lord Eldon, in the report of his conversation with the king on the 28th of March, which lasted four hours, observes: "His majesty employed a very considerable portion of his time in stating all that he represented to have passed when Mr. Canning was made minister, and expressly stated that Mr. Canning would never—and that he engaged that he would never—allow him to be troubled about the Roman catholic question. He blamed all the ministers who had retired upon Canning's appointment, representing, in substance, that their retirement, and not he, had made Canning minister."

In all the communications which Mr. Peel had with the king on this subject, his determination to maintain the existing laws was most strongly expressed. In November, 1824, the king wrote, "The sentiments of the king upon catholic emancipation are those of his revered and excellent father; and from these sentiments the king never can, and never will, deviate." All subsequent declarations of opinion on his part were to the same effect; and the events which were passing in Ireland, "the systematic agitation, the intemperate conduct of some of the Roman catholic leaders, the violent and abusive speeches of others, the acts of the association, assuming the functions of government, and, as it appeared to the king, the passiveness and want of energy in the Irish executive, irritated his majesty, and indisposed him the more to recede from his declared resolution to maintain inviolate the existing law."*

In the early part of January, 1829, the duke of

Wellington had an interview with the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of London, and the bishop of Durham, for the purpose of laying before them the state of affairs in Ireland, in the hope of convincing them that the interests of the church required the settlement of the catholic question. It was thought that a favourable opinion expressed by them would have had great influence on the mind of the king; but the duke's arguments utterly failed to convince them. They informed him that they could not lend their sanction to the proposed course of proceeding, but must offer a decided opposition to the removal of Roman catholic disabilities. On New Year's Day the bishop of Oxford wrote to Mr. Peel, that he had just returned from Addington, and that he found the three bishops decidedly hostile to all concessions, refusing to consent to them in any form. He considered that matter, therefore, as settled. Mr. Peel now began to feel that the difficulties in the way of emancipation were almost insuperable. There was the declared opinion of the king, of the house of lords, and of the church, all decidedly hostile to the proposed measure. What the home secretary chiefly apprehended at that moment was, that the king, hearing the result of the duke's conference with the bishops, would make some public and formal declaration of his resolution to maintain, as a matter of conscience and religious obligation, the existing laws; and would then take a position in reference to the catholic question similar to that in which his father had stood, and which it might be almost impossible for him, however urgent the necessity, afterwards to abandon.

"Up to this period," afterwards wrote Sir Robert Peel, in his "Memoirs," "I had cherished the hope that the duke of Wellington might be enabled to overcome the difficulties which were opposed to his undertaking, and that I might be allowed to retire from office, and, in a private station, to lend every assistance in my power during the progress of the contemplated measure through parliament. I had proposed my retirement from office much more from a sincere belief that, by the sacrifice of office, my co-operation with the duke of Wellington would be more effectual, than from any other consideration. . . . I could not but perceive, in the course of my constant intercourse with him, that the duke of Wellington began to despair of success. He well knew there would be nothing in the resignation of office half so painful to my feelings as the separation from him at a period of serious difficulty. From the moment of his appointment to the chief place in the government, not a day had passed without the most unreserved communication, personally or in writing; not a point had arisen on which, as my correspondence with the duke will amply testify, there had not been the most complete and cordial concurrence of opinion."

The meeting of parliament was approaching, and it was necessary to come to some final decision. Sir Robert Peel had a thorough conviction that if the duke of Wellington should fail in overcoming the king's objections, no other man could succeed. It might have been thought that the high and established character of earl

* "Peel's Memoirs," pp. 274—276.

Grey, his great abilities, and great political experience, would have enabled him to surmount these various difficulties. In addition to these high qualifications, he had the advantage of having been the strenuous and consistent advocate of the Roman catholic cause; the advantage also of having stood aloof from the administrations of Mr. Canning and lord Ripon, and of having strong claims on the esteem and respect of all parties, without being fettered by the trammels of any. Sir Robert Peel had, however, the strongest reasons for the conviction that lord Grey could not have succeeded in an undertaking which, in the supposed case of his accession to power, would have been abandoned as hopeless by the duke of Wellington, and abandoned on the ground that the sovereign would not adopt the advice of his servants. The result of the whole is thus summed up by Sir Robert Peel:—"Being convinced that the catholic question must be settled, and without delay; being resolved that no act of mine should obstruct or retard its settlement; impressed with the strongest feelings of attachment to the duke of Wellington, of admiration of his upright conduct and intentions as prime minister, of deep interest in the success of an undertaking on which he had entered from the purest motives and the highest sense of public duty, I determined not to insist upon retirement from office, but to make to the duke the voluntary offer of that official co-operation, should he consider it indispensable, which he scrupled, from the influence of kind and considerate feelings, to require from me."

The home secretary once more submitted his views to the duke, in a memorandum dated January 12th, that was written with a view to be submitted to the king, in which he put the inevitable alternative of a cabinet united in the determination to carry catholic emancipation, or a cabinet constructed on exclusively protestant principles; and he came to the conclusion that no cabinet so constructed could possibly carry on the general administration of the country. The state of the house of commons appeared to him to be an insuperable obstacle to the successful issue of that experiment. Since the year 1807 there had been five parliaments, and in the course of each of these, with one exception, the house of commons had come to a decision in favour of the consideration of the catholic question. The present parliament had decided in the same manner. A dissolution, were it practicable, would not result in an election more favourable to the protestant interest, if an exclusively protestant government were formed. Even should there be an increase of anti-catholic members in England, it would not compensate for the increased excitement in Ireland, and the violent and vexatious opposition that would be given by fifty or sixty Irish members, returned by the Catholic Association and the priests. Then there would be the difficulty about preserving the peace in Ireland. During the last autumn, out of the regular infantry force in the United Kingdom, amounting to about 30,000 men, 25,000 were stationed either in Ireland or on the west coast of England, with a view to the maintenance of tranquillity in Ireland, this country being then at peace with all the world. What would be the consequence should England be involved in a war with

some foreign power? Various other considerations were urged, upon which Mr. Peel founded his advice to the king, which was—that he should not grant the catholic claims, or any part of them, precipitately and unadvisedly—but that he should, in the first instance, remove the barrier which prevented the consideration of the catholic question by the cabinet, and permit his confidential servants to consider it in all its relations, on the same principles on which they consider any other question of public policy, in the hope that some plan of adjustment could be proposed, on the authority and responsibility of a government likely to command the assent of parliament, and to unite in its support a powerful weight of protestant opinion, from a conviction that it is a settlement equitable towards Roman catholics, and safe as it concerns the protestant establishment.

The paper was communicated to the king by the duke of Wellington, who wrote, on the 17th of January, that he entirely concurred in the sentiments and opinions contained in it; and referring to Mr. Peel's request to be allowed to retire from the government, the duke said:—"I tell you fairly, I do not see the smallest chance of getting the better of these difficulties, if you should not continue in office. Even if I should be able to obtain the king's consent to enter upon the course which it will probably be found the wisest to adopt—which it is almost certain that I shall not if I should not have your assistance in office—the difficulties in parliament will be augmented tenfold in consequence of your secession, while the means of getting the better of them will be diminished in the same proportion. I entreat you, then, to reconsider the subject, and to give us and the country the benefit of your advice and assistance in this most difficult and important crisis."

The duke brought this letter to Mr. Peel, who read it in his presence, and then at once told him that he would not press his retirement, but would remain in office, and would propose, with the king's consent, the measures contemplated by the government for the settlement of the catholic question. Immediately after this decision was taken, he attended a meeting of the cabinet, and announced his determination to his colleagues. One of these, lord Ellenborough, could not refrain from writing to express his admiration of his conduct, dictated by true statesman-like wisdom; adding, that he had acted nobly by the government, and in a manner which no member of it would forget. On the day that the king got the paper, those of the ministers who had uniformly voted against the catholic question had each a separate interview with the king, and individually expressed their concurrence in the course Mr. Peel recommended. The ministers were—the duke of Wellington, lord Lyndhurst, lord Bathurst, Mr. Goulbourne, and Mr. Herries. The king, after this interview, intimated his consent that the cabinet should consider the whole state of Ireland, and submit their views to him, not pledging himself, however, to adopt them, even if they should concur unanimously in the course to be pursued. The king was not convinced by Mr. Peel's arguments. He admitted it to be a good statement, but denied that it was an argumentative one.

CHAPTER XV.

The Opening of the Session of 1829.—Peel rejected by the Oxford University—Bill for the Suppression of the Catholic Association—The Emancipation Bill—Public Excitement—Debates in the Commons—The Bill passed by triumphant Majorities—Debates in the Lords—The Duke of Wellington's Speech—Opposition of the Bishops—The Bill carried by sweeping Majorities—Lord Eldon—The King's Distress—He wishes to withdraw his Assent—Endeavours to form another Administration, and failing, yields to the Duke's Demands—His bitter Complaints to Lord Eldon—Roman Catholic Statistics—Attacks on the Duke of Wellington—Duel with Lord Winchilsea—Abolition of the Irish Forty Shilling Freeholders—Testimonial to O'Connell—His Exclusion as M.P. for Clare—Appears at the Bar of the House, and refuses to take the Protestant Oaths—He is heard at the Bar—His Claim rejected—The Second Clare Election—Mr. Smith O'Brien and Mr. Steele—O'Connell returned without Opposition—O'Connell and the Beresfords—Proposed Testimonial to the Duke of Wellington—O'Connell for Repeal—The Roman Catholic Prelates—Dr. Doyle—"J. K. L."

PARLIAMENT was opened by commission on the 5th of February, 1829. The state of Ireland was the chief topic of the royal speech. The existence of the Catholic Association was referred to as inimical to the public peace; and its suppression was recommended, as a necessary preliminary to the consideration of the disabilities affecting the Roman catholics. This part of the speech excited much interest, as prelude to the great contest of the session. On the 4th, Mr. Peel had written to the vice-chancellor of Oxford, resigning his seat for the university, which he had won from Canning on the strength of his anti-catholic principles. He need not have resigned, but he acted the more honourable part. Having offered himself for reelection, he was opposed by Sir Robert Inglis, who, after a contest which lasted three days, during which 1,364 votes were polled, was elected by a majority of 146. As one of the most numerous convocations ever held in Oxford had, in the previous year, by a majority of three to one, voted against concession to the Roman catholics, it was a matter of surprise that the home secretary was not defeated by a larger majority. On the 10th, Mr. Peel introduced the first of the three measures intended for the pacification of Ireland—a bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association. As it was known to be an essential condition of granting emancipation, there was little opposition to it either in parliament or in Ireland. By it the lord-lieutenant was empowered to disperse the meetings of any association he thought dangerous to the public peace. The bill quickly passed both houses, and in a few days received the royal assent. Anticipating the action of the executive, the association, on the 12th of February, dissolved itself, with the unanimous concurrence of the bishops, Mr. Sheil stating at the meeting that he was authorised to throw twenty-two mitres into the scale.

In the royal speech his majesty recommended that, when this special object was accomplished, parliament should take into their deliberate consideration the whole condition of Ireland, and that they should review the laws which imposed disabilities upon Roman catholics, to see whether their removal could be effected "consistently with the full and permanent security of our establishments in church and state, with the maintenance of the reformed religion established by law, and of the rights and privileges of the bishops and of the clergy of this realm, and of the churches committed to their charge."

Great was the excitement when, in pursuance of this recommendation, Mr. Peel introduced the Emancipation Bill on the 5th of March. Everywhere the protestant press teemed, and the protestant pulpit rang with denunciations of Wellington and Peel as arch traitors. From the highest pinnacle of popularity, the duke fell to the lowest depth of infamy; the laurels won in so many glorious fields were withered by the furious breath of popular execration. Petitions were poured into the house of commons from all parts of the United Kingdom, and "the pressure from without" was brought to bear against the two ministers, who were considered the chief delinquents, with a force and vehemence that would have deterred a man of weaker nerves than the duke of Wellington; but he felt that he had a duty to discharge, and he did not shrink from the consequences. Nor did Mr. Peel. His speech, in introducing the measure, went over the ground he had often traversed in privately debating the question with his friends. Matters could not go on as they were. There must be a united cabinet to carry on the king's government effectually. It must be united either on the principle of catholic emancipation or catholic exclusion. It must either concede the catholic claims, or recall existing rights and privileges. This was impossible—no government could stand that attempted it; and if it were done, civil war would be inevitable. The house of commons, trembling in the nice balance of opinion, had at length inclined to concession. Ireland had been governed, since the union, almost invariably by coercive acts. There was always some political organisation antagonistic to the British government. The Catholic Association had just been suppressed; but another would soon spring out of its ashes, if the catholic question were not settled. Mr. O'Connell had boasted that he could drive a coach-and-six through the former act for its suppression; and lord Eldon had engaged to drive "the meanest conveyance, even a donkey cart, through the act of 1829." The new member for Oxford (Sir Robert Inglis) also stated that twenty-three counties in Ireland were prepared to follow the example of Clare. "What will you do," asked Mr. Peel, "with that power, that tremendous power, which the elective franchise, exercised under the control of religion, at this moment confers upon the Roman catholics? What will you do with the thirty or forty seats that will be claimed in Ireland by the persevering efforts of the agitators, directed by the Catholic Association, and carried out by the agency of every priest and bishop in Ireland?" Parliament began to recede; there could be no limit to the retrogression. Such a course would produce a reaction, violent in proportion to the hopes that had been excited. Fresh rigours would become necessary; the re-enactment of the penal code would not be sufficient. They must abolish trial by jury, or, at least, incapacitate catholics from sitting on juries. Two millions of protestants must have a complete monopoly of power and privilege in a country which contained five millions of catholics, who were in most of the country four to one—in some districts twenty to one—of the protestants. True, there were difficulties in the way of a settlement. "But," asked Mr. Peel, "what great measure which has stamped its name upon the era of

its adoption has ever been carried through without objections insuperable, if they had been abstractedly considered? Our difficulties may be great, but they are as nothing compared with those which obstructed the great measure which united in one whole the two separate and hostile kingdoms into which this island was divided. We must contemplate the measure now proposed in the same spirit in which our ancestors acted under similar circumstances; we must look to the end to be achieved, and the danger to be avoided. We must be content to make mutual sacrifices, if they are essential to the attainment of a paramount object, and withdraw objections to separate parts of a comprehensive scheme, if, by insisting on these objections, we shall endanger its final accomplishment."

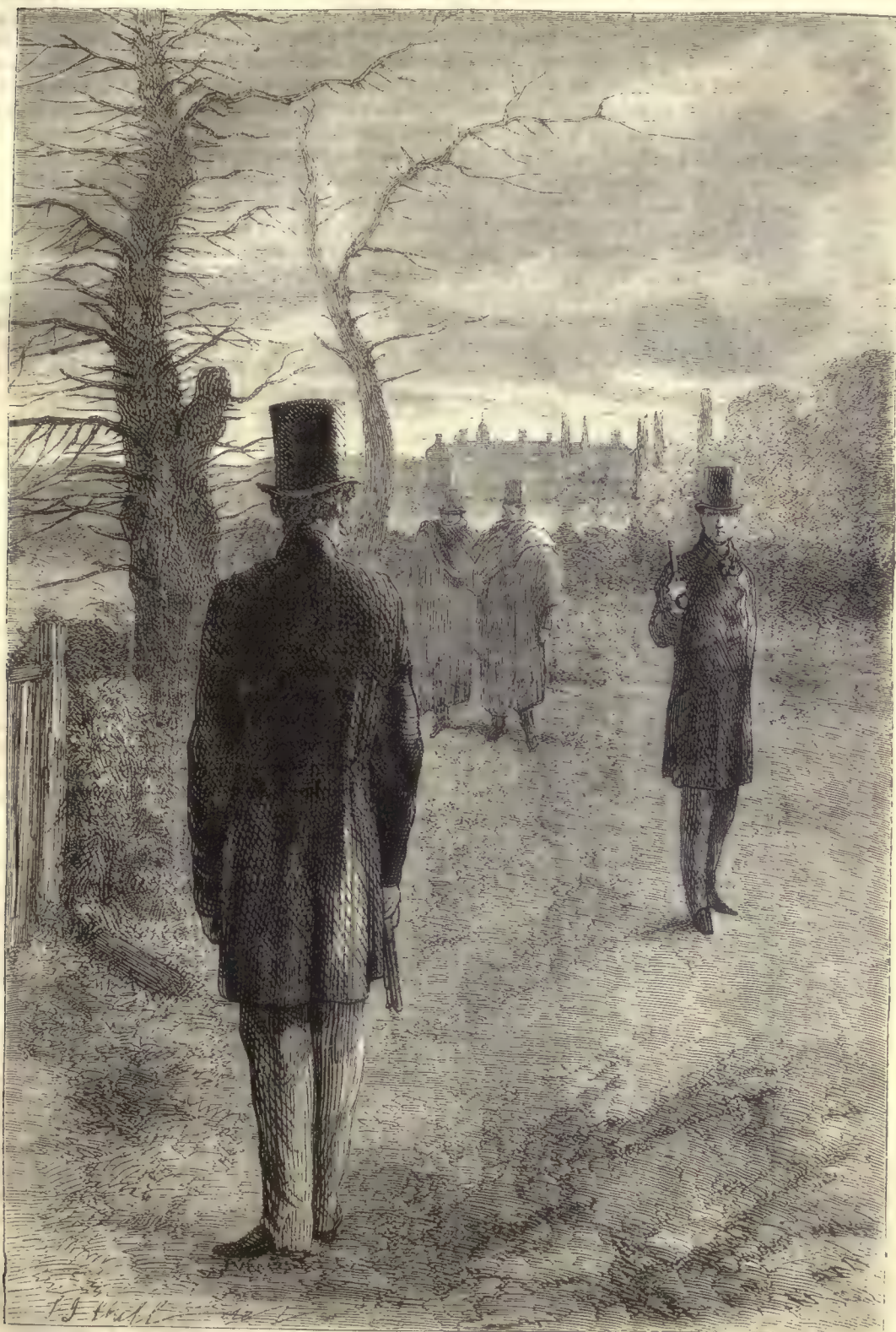
The chief speakers on the other side were Sir Robert Inglis, Mr. Banks, and Mr. Sadler. They contended that the evils on which the home secretary had dwelt—the disturbed state of Ireland, the difficulty of governing the empire with a divided cabinet, the impossibility of getting on with a house of commons which left the administration in a minority—would not be removed or prevented by emancipation. Ever since the first relaxation of the penal code, concession but added fuel to the fire of agitation. What, then, was to be expected from throwing open the portals of the legislature to the catholic body? What but this—that the advanced work thus gained, would become the salient angle from which the fire would be directed on the body of the fortress; and the work of agitation, having its leaders in both houses of parliament, would be carried on with increased vigour, for the purpose of overthrowing the protestant establishment, for the severance of the union, and the dismemberment of the empire? The manner of the concession would encourage the policy of aggression. It was not, they asserted, produced by the gradual and quiet growth of public opinion. "It was the victory of force, driving former enemies into desertion by intimidation. It openly told the catholic agitators that they were too strong for the government of Great Britain; that whatever they asked would be conceded, even to the giving up of the constitution, provided only it was asked with sufficient clamour and violence. The solid ground of right had been abandoned for the selfish and tortuous path of expediency—expediency, the pretext for so many crimes. In France expediency destroyed the church—expediency murdered the king."

Leave was given to bring in the bill by a majority of 188; the numbers being 348 for the motion, and 160 against it. This astounding result was the signal for pouring into the house a flood of protestant petitions, which, in the interval between the first and second reading, amounted to nearly 1,000; but an organisation like the Brunswick Clubs could easily get up any number of petitions. Considering the number of parishes in England, it is surprising, not that the number was so great, but that it was not greater. On the 18th, the second reading was carried by a majority of 353 to 180; and on the 30th, the third reading by a majority of 320 to 142, giving a majority of 178.

The same day it was carried by the home secretary to

the house of lords, accompanied by an unusual number of members. In introducing the measure in the upper house, the duke of Wellington spoke with great force, and with all the directness and simplicity for which he was remarkable. One memorable passage deserves to be recorded in this history:—"It has been my fortune," said the duke, "to have seen much of war—more than most men. I have been constantly engaged in the active duties of the military profession from boyhood until I have grown grey. My life has been passed in familiarity with scenes of death and human suffering. Circumstances have placed me in countries where the war was internal—between opposite parties in the same nation; and rather than a country I loved should be visited with the calamities which I have seen—with the unutterable horrors of civil war—I would run any risk, I would make any sacrifice, I would freely lay down my life. There is nothing which destroys property and prosperity as civil war does. By it the hand of man is raised against his neighbour, against his brother, and against his father! The servant betrays his master; and the master ruins his servant. Yet this is the resource to which we must have looked—these are the means which we must have applied—in order to have put an end to this state of things, if we had not embraced the option of bringing forward the measure, for which I hold myself responsible."

The archbishop of Canterbury moved the rejection of the bill; and was supported by the archbishops of York and Armagh, the bishops of London, Durham, and Salisbury; lords Winchilsea, Berkley, Tenterdon, and Eldon. The chief defenders of the measure were lords Grey, Lansdowne, Plunkett, Goderich, and Lyndhurst. On a division, the second reading was carried by 217 against 212. On the 10th of April, the bill was read a third time, by a majority of 104; the numbers being 213 for it, and 109 against it. The sweeping majorities in the lords were still more astounding than those in the commons; and they spread the utmost consternation through the ranks of the conservatives, who felt as if the very foundations of society were giving way, and the pillars of the constitution were falling. The lords had hitherto thrown out the Emancipation Bills as fast as they came to them, by majorities varying from forty to fifty. Lord Eldon was their prophet, and the old conservative peers had followed his guidance implicitly for a quarter of a century; but during that time a generation of hereditary legislators had grown up, who had as thorough a contempt for the ex-chancellor's antiquated prejudices as he had for their youth and inexperience. Lord Eldon had, however, some compensation for being thus deserted in the house of peers by many of his followers, and having his authority as a statesman disregarded, as well as for the marked neglect of him by the ministry, in the sympathy and confidence of the distressed king, who was shocked beyond measure at the conduct of the house of lords. When a reluctant consent was wrung from his majesty to have the measure brought forward by the cabinet, he felt, after all, that he was doing nothing very rash; he had the strongest assurance that the bill would never pass the lords. He told lord Eldon that, after the ministers had fatigued him



THE DUEL BETWEEN THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AND THE EARL OF WINCHILSEA.

by many hours' conversation on the painful subject, he simply said, "Go on." But he also produced copies of letters which he had written, in which he assented to their proceeding with the bill, adding, certainly, very strong expressions of the pain and misery the consent cost him. In his perplexity, he evidently wished to avail himself of Eldon's casuistry to get out of the difficulty by retracting; but the latter was constrained to tell him "it was impossible to maintain that his assent had not been expressed, or to cure the evils which were consequential."*

The large majorities in the house of lords were to be ascribed chiefly to the unparalleled influence of the duke of Wellington. But the public at the time were little aware of the difficulties that great man had to deal with in overcoming the opposition of the king. When the storm of conservative violence reached its height, after the rejection of Peel in Oxford, and his return, not without a struggle, for Westbury; and when, on the 3rd of March, he gave notice that he would draw the attention of the house to the clause of the royal speech referring to Ireland, the king, greatly excited and alarmed, sent the same evening to desire that the prime minister, the home secretary, and the chancellor should wait upon him next day. The king received his three ministers, when they presented themselves at the palace, kindly but gravely; he looked anxious and embarrassed while he requested them to make him acquainted with the details of their bill. It was explained to him that it would relieve Roman catholics from the necessity of making a declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation; whilst it so far modified in their case the oath of supremacy, as to omit all notice of the king's authority in things spiritual. "What!" he exclaimed, "do you mean to alter the ancient law of supremacy?" It was to no purpose he was shown that the alteration applied only to Roman catholics, who would be dispensed from swearing what they could not believe; but he appealed to his own coronation oath, in reference to which he could not recognise the dispensing power of his ministers. "The king was condescending in the extreme. He seemed deeply grieved at the dilemma to which they had been brought. He acknowledged that possibly he had gone too far on former occasions, though he had acted entirely through misapprehension. But now he trusted that they would see, with him, that it had become a point of conscience, and that there was no alternative left him except to withdraw his assent. In the most respectful manner they acquiesced in his majesty's determination, allowing, without a murmur, that he had a perfect right to act as he proposed. But when he went on further to ask what they intended to do, the duke's answer was explicit: they must retire from his majesty's service, and explain to parliament that unexpected obstacles had arisen to the accomplishment of the policy which they were engaged to pursue. To this Mr. Peel added, that as the bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association had been carried on the understanding that other and more comprehensive measures would follow, it would be necessary to make parliament generally aware of the causes which operated to prevent the bringing forward

of those measures. The king heard all this to an end, without attempting to interrupt or argue with his ministers. He admitted, on the contrary, that it was impossible for them to take any other course, and then bade them farewell, kissing each of them on both cheeks. They set off from Windsor immediately, and arrived at lord Bathurst's, where their colleagues were waiting dinner for them. They made a full report of all that had occurred, and announced that the government was at an end. The party broke up, believing themselves to be out of office; but early next morning, before any decisive steps had been taken, a special messenger arrived at Apeley House with a letter from the king. It was guardedly expressed, for it went no further than to state that his majesty had found greater difficulties than he expected in forming a new cabinet, and was therefore desirous that the present ministry should go on. The moment was critical, and the position of the government delicate, and, in some sense, insecure. No doubt, his majesty's letter might be read as implying an abandonment of the objections which he had taken to the policy of his ministers over-night, but it was certainly capable of a different interpretation. It appeared, therefore, to the duke, that before proceeding further, it would be necessary to come to a clear understanding with the king as to his majesty's real intentions, and Mr. Peel concurring in this opinion, the duke was requested to write to the king on the subject. He did so, with all the candour and loyalty which was natural to him; and the result was an unequivocal declaration from the sovereign that he would accept the measures of his ministers as his own."*

With lord Eldon, however, he held different language, complaining bitterly of the difficulties in which the ministers had involved him. He is represented as struggling desperately in meshes from which he found it impossible to extricate himself; and, as usual with weak minds, he threw all the blame of his misery on others. Lord Eldon writes:—"He complained that he had never seen the bills—that the condition of Ireland had not been taken into consideration—that the Association Bill had been passed through both houses before he had seen it—that it was a very inefficient measure compared to those which he had in vain himself recommended—that the other proposed measures gave him the greatest possible pain and uneasiness—that he was in the state of a person with a pistol presented to his breast—that he had nothing to fall back upon—that his ministers had threatened (I think he said twice, at the time of my seeing him) to resign if the measures were not proceeded with, and that he had said to them 'Go on,' when he knew not how to relieve himself from the state in which he was placed; and that in one of those meetings, when resignation was threatened, he was urged to the sort of consent he gave by what passed in the interview between him and his ministers, till the interview and the talk had brought him into such a state that he hardly knew what he was about, when he, after several hours, said—'Go on.' He then repeatedly expressed himself as in a state of the greatest misery, saying, 'What

* Twiss's "Life of Eldon," vol. iii., p. 85.

* Gleig's "Life of the Duke of Wellington," p. 461.

can I do? I have nothing to fall back upon;’ and musing for some time, and then repeating the same expression.”

In reference to a subsequent interview, lord Eldon remarks: “I was not sent for afterwards, but went on Thursday, the 9th April, with more addresses. In the second interview, which began a little before two o’clock, the king repeatedly—and with some minutes intervening between his repeated declarations, musing in silence in the interim—expressed his anguish, pain, and misery that the measure had ever been thought of, and as often declared that he had been most harshly and cruelly treated—that he had been treated as a man whose consent had been asked with a pistol pointed to his breast, or as obliged, if he did not give it, to leap down from a five pair of stairs window. What could he do? What had he to fall back upon?”

After relating much more in the same strain, lord Eldon adds: “Little more passed, except occasional bursts of expression, ‘What can I do? What can I now fall back upon? What can I fall back upon? I am miserable, wretched. My situation is dreadful; nobody about me to advise with. If I do give my consent I will go to the Baths after all, and from thence to Hanover. I’ll return no more to England. I’ll make no Roman catholic peers; I will not do what this bill will enable me to do. I’ll return no more. Let them get a catholic king in Clarence! (I think he also mentioned Sussex.) The people will see that I did not wish this.’ There were the strongest appearances, certainly, of misery. He more than once stopped my leaving him. When the time came that I was to go, he threw his arms round my neck, and expressed great misery. I left him at about twenty minutes or a quarter before five. I certainly thought when I left him that he would express great difficulty, when the bill was prepared for the royal assent, about giving it.” The writer adds, sarcastically:—“I fear that it seemed to be given as a matter of course.” Next day, lord Eldon wrote to his daughter: “The fatal bill received the royal assent yesterday afternoon. After all I had heard in my visits, not a day’s delay. God bless us and his church.” At Windsor, on the 18th of April, the king pronounced over the bill he so hated the words—‘*Le roi le veut.*’ In his subsequent conduct he studiously evinced his displeasure towards the emancipationists, and his satisfaction with those who had opposed his government. To this manifestation of feeling lord Eldon refers in a letter to his daughter:—“The universal tattle here is about the manner in which the king, at the levée, received the voters for the catholics—most uncivilly, markedly so towards the lords spiritual, the bishops, who so voted—and the civility with which he received the anti-catholic voters, particularly the bishops. It seems to be very general talk now that his ministers went much beyond what they should have said in parliament as to his consent to the measure. Consent, however, he certainly did, but with a language of reluctance, pain, and misery which, if it had been represented, would have prevented much of that rattling which carried the measure.”

The general talk to which lord Eldon refers very naturally arose out of the king’s complaints. There were stories circulated at the time, on what appeared to be good authority, of repeated conferences, and extreme harshness

and arrogance shown towards the king by the prime minister. For these stories his biographer assures us there was not a shadow of foundation. The duke saw the king, more than once while the expediency of adopting a particular line of policy was still under consideration. They discussed the matter in all its bearings; and the king never concealed the reluctance with which he consented to follow the advice of his ministers. “But after the measure was arranged, the duke never saw the king, except on the morning of the 4th. of March, till the bill had passed through both houses. All the stories told, therefore, of tears on the one side, and threats and rudeness on the other, were the mere inventions of malice or disappointed ambition.”*

The number of catholics in Britain at the time of passing the relief bill was estimated by themselves at nearly 1,000,000, scattered, in various proportions, through England, Scotland, and Wales. Of these, 200,000 were resident in London. The most catholic counties in England are Lancashire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Cheshire, Northumberland, Durham, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Kent. In Ireland, the Roman catholics were estimated at five millions and a half; and the protestants, of all denominations, at one million and three-quarters. By the removal of the disabilities, eight English catholic peers were enabled to take their seats by right in the house of lords. The catholic baronets in England were then sixteen in number. In Ireland there were eight Roman catholic peers; in Scotland, two. The system of religious exclusion had lasted 271 years, from the passing of the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity in 1559. The oath of supremacy, however, was not at first tendered to the members of the upper house; and several peers continued Roman catholics till the reign of Charles II.

During the excitement that followed the passing of the Emancipation Act, incessant attacks were made upon the character of the duke of Wellington. Perhaps the most violent of these was published in the *Standard* by the earl of Winchelsea, one of the most ardent of the anti-catholic peers, who charged the premier with disgraceful conduct. The offence was contained in a letter addressed by lord Winchelsea to Mr. Coleridge, secretary to the committee for establishing the King’s College, London. He said he felt rather doubtful as to the sincerity of the motives which had actuated some of the prime movers in that undertaking, “when he considered that the noble duke at the head of his majesty’s government had been induced on this occasion to assume a new character, and to step forward himself as the public advocate of religion and morality.” He then proceeded:—“Late political events have convinced me that the whole transaction was intended as a blind to the protestant and high church party; that the noble duke, who had, for some time previous to that period, determined upon breaking in upon the constitution of 1688, might the more effectually, under the cloak of some outward show of zeal for the protestant religion, carry on his insidious designs for the infringement of our liberties, and the introduction of popery into

* “Life of Wellington,” p. 460

every department of the state." The duke having obtained from lord Winchilsea an avowal of the authorship, demanded a retraction or apology, which was refused. The matter was then referred to friends, and a hostile meeting was agreed upon. "It is," says Mr. Gleig, "a curious feature in this somewhat unfortunate occurrence, that when the moment for action arrived, it was found that the duke did not possess a pair of duelling pistols. Considering the length of time he had spent in the army, and the habits of military society towards the close of the last century, that fact bore incontestable evidence to the conciliatory temper and great discretion of the duke. Sir Henry Hardinge, therefore, who acted as his friend, was forced to look for pistols elsewhere, and borrowed them at last—he himself being as unprovided as his principal—from Dr. Hume, the medical man who accompanied them to the ground. The combatants met in Battersea Fields, now Battersea Park. Lord Winchilsea, attended by the earl of Falmouth, having received the duke's fire, discharged his pistol in the air. A written explanation was then produced, which the duke declined to receive unless the word 'apology' was inserted; and this point being yielded, they separated as they had met, with cold civility."

Long after these events had ceased to occupy public attention, the Rev. Mr. Gleig took occasion to refer to them in one of those confidential conversations with which he was occasionally honoured by the duke. "'You speak as a moralist,' he observed, smiling; 'and I assure you that I am no advocate of duelling under ordinary circumstances; but my difference with lord Winchilsea, considering the cause in which it originated, and the critical position of affairs at the moment, can scarcely be regarded as a private quarrel. He refused to me, being the king's minister, what every man, in or out of office, may fairly claim—the right to change his views, under a change of circumstances, on a great public question. He did his best to establish the principle that a man in my situation must be a traitor unless he adhere, through thick and thin, to a policy once advocated. His attack upon me was part of a plan to render the conduct of public affairs impossible to the king's servants. I did my best to make him understand the nature of his mistake, and showed him how he might escape from it. He rejected my advice, and there remained for me only one means of extorting from him an acknowledgment that he was wrong.' 'But,' observed Mr. Gleig, 'he behaved well on the ground, at all events. He refused to fire at you.' 'Certainly,' replied the duke, 'he did not fire at me; and seeing that such was his intention, I turned my pistol aside, and fired wide of him; but that did not make amends for the outrageous charge brought against me in his letter. It was only the admission that the charge was outrageous that at all atoned for that; but it would have been more creditable to him to have made it when first requested to do so, than at last. He behaved, however, with great coolness; and was, and I am sure continues to be, very sorry that he allowed his temper to run away with him.'"

A third bill yet remained to be carried, in order to complete the ministerial scheme of emancipation, and supply the security necessary for its satisfactory working. This was the bill for disfranchising the forty shilling freeholders, by whose instrumentality, it may be said, emancipation was effected. It was they that returned Mr. O'Connell for Clare; it was they that would have returned the members for twenty-three other counties, pledged to support his policy. It is true that this class of voters was generally dependent upon the landlords, unless under the influence of violent excitement, when they were wrested like weapons from their hands by the priests, and used with a vengeance for the punishment of those by whom they had been created. In neither case did they exercise the franchise in fulfilment of the purpose for which it was given. In both cases those voters were the instruments of a power which availed itself of the forms of the constitution, but was directly opposed to its spirit. Disfranchisement, however, under any circumstances, was distasteful to both conservative and liberal statesmen. Mr. Brougham said he consented to it in this case "as the price—almost the extravagant price"—of emancipation; and Sir James Macintosh remarked that it was one of those "tough morsels" which he had been scarcely able to swallow. The measure was opposed by Mr. Huskisson, lord Palmerston, and lord Duncannon, as not requisite, and not calculated to accomplish its object. But although Mr. O'Connell had repeatedly declared that he would not accept emancipation if the faithful "forties" were to be sacrificed, that he would rather die on the scaffold than submit to any such measure, though Mr. Sheil had denounced it in language the most vehement, yet the measure was allowed to pass through both houses of parliament without any opposition worth naming; only seventeen members voting against the second reading in the commons, and there being no division against it in the lords. Ireland beheld the sacrifice in silence. Mr. O'Connell forgot his solemn vows, so recently registered, and, what was more strange, the priests did not remind him of his obligation. Perhaps they were not sorry to witness the annihilation of a power which landlords might use against them, and which agitators might wield in a way that they could not at all times control. There had been always an uneasy feeling among the prelates and the higher clergy at the influence which Mr. O'Connell and the other lay-agitators had acquired, because it tended to raise in the people a spirit of independence which rendered them sometimes refractory as members of the church, and suggested the idea of combination against their own pastors, if they declined to become their leaders in any popular movement. The popular leaders in Ireland, however, consoling themselves with the assurance that many of the class of "bold peasantry" which they had glorified would still enjoy the franchise as ten-pound freeholders, consented, reluctantly of course, to the extinction of 300,000 "forties." They considered the danger of delay, and the probability that if this opportunity were missed, another might not occur for years of striking off the shackles which the upper classes of Roman catholics especially felt to be so galling.

When emancipation was carried, they did not forget the claims of Mr. O'Connell, who had laboured so hard for

* Gleig's "Life of Wellington," p. 464.

a quarter of a century for its accomplishment. A testimonial was soon after got up to reward him for his long services. Mr. C. O'Laughlin, of Dublin, subscribed £500; the earl of Shrewsbury 1,000 guineas, and the less grateful duke of Norfolk the sum of £100. The collection of the testimonial was organised in every district throughout Ireland, and a sum of £50,000 sterling was collected. Mr. O'Connell did not love money for its own sake. The immense sums that were poured into the coffers of the Catholic Association were spent freely in carrying on the agitation, and the large annuity which he himself received was mainly devoted to the same object. One means, which had no small effect in accomplishing the object, was the extremely liberal hospitality which was kept up, not only at Derrynane Abbey, but at his town residence in Merriion Square; and he had, besides, a host of retainers more or less dependent upon his bounty.

There was one irritating circumstance connected with the Emancipation Act. The words, "thereafter to be elected," were introduced for the purpose of preventing O'Connell from taking his seat in virtue of the election of 1828. The Irish Roman catholics considered this legislating against an individual an act unworthy of the British senate—and, as against the great catholic advocate, a mean, vindictive, and discreditable deed. But it was admitted that Wellington and Peel were not to blame for it; that on their part it was a pacificatory concession to dogged bigotry in high places. Mr. Fagan states that Mr. O'Connell was willing to give up the county of Clare to Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, and to go into parliament himself for a borough, adding that he had absolutely offered 3,000 guineas to Sir Edward Denny for the borough of Tralee, which had always been regularly sold, and was, in point of fact assigned as a fortune under a marriage settlement. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, however, rather scornfully rejected the offer, and Mr. O'Connell himself appeared in the house of commons on the 15th of May, to try whether he would be permitted to take his seat. In the course of an hour, we are told, the heads of his speech were arranged, and written on a small card. The event was expected, and the house was crowded to excess. At five o'clock the speaker called on any new member desiring to be sworn to come to the table. O'Connell accordingly presented himself, introduced by lords Ebrington and Duncannon. He remained for some time standing at the table, pointing out the oaths he was willing to take, namely, those required by the new act, and handing in the certificate of his return and qualifications. His refusal to take the oaths of supremacy and abjuration having been reported to the speaker, he was directed to withdraw, when Mr. Brougham moved that he should be heard at the bar, to account for his refusal. But on the motion of Mr. Peel, after a long discussion, the consideration of the question was deferred till the 18th. The *Times* of the next day stated that the narrative of the proceeding could convey but an imperfect idea of the silent, the almost breathless attention with which he was received in the house, advancing to and retiring from the table. The benches were filled, in an unusual degree, with members, and there was no recollection of so large a number of peers brought by curiosity into the house of commons.

The speaker's expression of countenance and manner towards the honourable gentleman were extremely courteous, and his declaration that he "must withdraw," firm and authoritative. Mr. O'Connell, for a moment, looked round as one who had reason to expect support, and this failing, he bowed most respectfully, and withdrew. The *Globe*, expressing the feelings of the English liberals on the transaction, said: "Mr. O'Connell has forced us to emancipate the catholics, he has brought us to that dreadful pass that we have all but lost our places—nay more, he has compelled us to separate from our old allies, the ultra tories; and we will, therefore, avenge our own embarrassments and the tears of John, lord Eldon, on his obnoxious person. Such are the sentiments which, should he, Mr. O'Connell, be sent back to be re-elected for Clare, will, we fear, be said by the more reflective portion of the public, to have influenced the conduct of government. On a technical point of law, they may, perhaps—though even this is doubtful—be defensible; but such technicality should not be suffered for an instant to interfere with or cloud the glory of an act like that of catholic emancipation; by which, in after ages, it will be the chief boast of the nineteenth century to have been distinguished."

On Monday, the 18th of May, O'Connell took his seat under the gallery. Seldom, if ever before, were there in the house so many strangers, peers, or members. The adjourned debate was resumed, and it was resolved that he should be heard at the bar. To the bar he then advanced, accompanied by his solicitor, Mr. Pierce Mahony, who supplied him with the books and documents, which had been arranged and marked to facilitate reference. His speech on that occasion is said to have been one of the most remarkable for ability and argument he ever delivered. It should be observed that his claim to enter the house without taking the oaths was supported from the first by the opinion of Mr. Charles Butler, an eminent English barrister, and a Roman catholic; but law and precedent were against him, and he would not be admitted. When Mr. O'Connell retired to his place under the gallery, he found the benches filled by the suite of the French embassy. Room was made for him between two gentlemen, who entered into conversation with him, and who spoke English like natives. One of these was Louis Philippe, and the other his son, the duke of Orleans.

Thus baffled, he returned to Dublin, where he met an enthusiastic reception. A meeting was held the next day, to make arrangements for insuring his return for Clare. Sheil on that occasion delivered an eloquent speech. "Put Daniel O'Connell," he said, "and put men who will sustain him and co-operate with him, into parliament, and you will soon see that the men who so powerfully acted upon public opinion out of parliament will not be wholly destitute of influence within it. With what strength of adjuration will Daniel O'Connell appeal to the feelings and magnanimity of Englishmen, and on behalf of Ireland demand fair dealing with her! With his perfect knowledge of detail, his vast and minute information upon Ireland, his vehement eloquence, and, above all, the people of Ireland at his back, what may he not effect for his country? Let us then, to a man, become his abettors in

this great struggle. We are all engaged, almost as much as himself, in this noble undertaking; and it will be proved to the minister, I trust, that there still is left a body of yeomanry in this country which, with the remnant of the elective franchise, like a broken sword, will be enabled to encounter the columns of the aristocracy, and give the rural despots battle. Yes! Daniel O'Connell will be thrown back upon the minister by the country! And what may we not expect that he may achieve? He that for so many years worked the great engine of public opinion, and wielded the wild democracy with such a gigantic arm, will exhibit the same efficiency. Rally, fellow citizens, round the man that, in public despair, never ceased to hope—that was never weary when all others fainted—that never stopped when all others fell; that, by his indomitable spirit, his chivalrous intrepidity, and, above all, by his superior, heart-stirring eloquence, contributed more than any one that lives to disenthral his country from her bondage."

On the 1st of June O'Connell started for Ennis. All the towns he passed through turned out to cheer him on, with green boughs and banners suspended from the windows. He arrived at Nenagh in the night, and the town was quickly illuminated. Having travelled all night, he retired to rest at Limerick; and while he slept, the streets were thronged with people, anxious to get a glance at their "liberator." A large tree of liberty was planted before the hotel, with musicians perched on the branches, playing national airs. The Limerick trades accompanied him in his progress towards Ennis, where his arrival was hailed with boundless enthusiasm, and where a triumphal car was prepared for him. Thus terminated a progress, during which he made twenty speeches, to nearly a million of persons. There were yet nearly two months to the election, and the constituency of ten-pound freeholders had yet to be formed under the new act. The landlords of the county were still, almost to a man, against him.

Amongst the most determined of his opponents was Sir Edward O'Brien, father of Mr. Smith O'Brien. The latter published an address to the electors of Clare, against O'Connell's pretensions. He stated in his address that the people had been led away from their landlords by false pretences. This was answered by Mr. Sheil, in a letter to the *Globe*—so strong, that parts of it were omitted. Sheil being applied to by Mr. Greig, as Smith O'Brien's friend, to supply the omitted parts, did so without hesitation, observing that his suppressed statement was:—"The assertion of Mr. William Smith O'Brien was a lie, and he knew it to be so;" and that among the other words suppressed were these:—"Blackguardism, gross nonsense, personal impertinence, audacious falsehood, and political baseness and ingratitude." The consequence was an affair of honour, which, fortunately, had no serious result. The quarrel is interesting, when considered in reference to Smith O'Brien's future connection with O'Connell in the repeal agitation. On the 30th of July O'Connell was a second time returned for Clare without opposition, and the event was celebrated with the usual demonstrations of joy and triumph.

Pending this election, a very curious episode occurred

with reference to the Beresford family. Towards the end of the year 1829, Mr. Villiers Stuart, who had been triumphantly returned against the Beresford interest in 1826, retired from the representation. The contest had cost him £30,000; and, notwithstanding this, he was continually beset by a host of people, claiming money from him under various pretences. As he would not satisfy their rapacious demands, they hooted him when passing through the streets of Waterford. This so disgusted him that he accepted the Chiltern Hundreds. Conciliation being now the order of the day between protestants and Roman catholics, Mr. Pierce Mahony, O'Connell's solicitor, agreed to become the conducting agent of the Beresford candidate, provided O'Connell and Sheil were engaged as counsel. To this those two gentlemen consented, O'Connell stipulating that the services to be rendered should be merely professional, and not political. He wrote to his solicitor, "If the offer of it, under these circumstances, shall be repeated—a matter of which I entertain some doubt, as out of term I made Villiers Stuart pay me £600—my professional remuneration I will leave to you and your brother." He added that he had always been exceedingly well treated by the Beresford family, when they employed him as a professional man. The candidate selected was lord George Beresford; and, in addition to the twenty guineas "retainer," Mr. Mahony was authorised to say that O'Connell should receive £300 for his fee, whether there should be a contest or not; and £600 if there should be a contest. Sheil, in addition to his retainer, was to have £200 if no contest, and £400 if there should be one.

On second thoughts, however, Mr. O'Connell was convinced of the impolicy of the transaction; or, as his biographer puts it, "on consultation with his friends in Dublin, he saw at once the danger of trusting the professions of the Beresfords;" and he resolved forthwith to put an end to the negotiations, alleging, as an excuse, that he might be called upon, as a member of parliament, to act as a judge of transactions in which he had been engaged as counsel. The affair, however, got abroad, and the *Times* commented strongly on the fact that O'Connell had consented to become counsel for the Beresfords in an electioneering contest against the liberal party; and that he withdrew from the engagement, after huxtering for a higher fee. O'Connell defended himself in an elaborate letter, and attacked the *Times* in return.

Mr. Pierce Mahony's active mind hit upon another conciliation project, which assumed the more respectable form of the "Wellington Testimonial." Soon after the act of emancipation received the royal assent, Mr. Mahony and a number of Irish friends were below the bar in the house of lords. The duke of Leinster came over to congratulate them on the event. After some conversation, it was agreed that a committee should be formed to set on foot a subscription for raising a testimonial to the duke. A committee was formed the next day, its most active members being the duke of Leinster, Mr. Agar Ellis, afterwards lord Dover, the earl of Darlington, and Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Mahony acting as secretary. It was arranged that a public meeting should be held in the London

Tavern to promote the object, the chair to be taken by lord Fitzwilliam. An hour before the meeting, when the resolutions drawn up by Mr. Mahony were in course of distribution to proposers and seconders, in the ante-room of the great hall, the knight of Kerry arrived with a message from the duke, requesting that the object should be abandoned. "It appeared that though the duke was exceedingly flattered by the proposed compliment, he was greatly embarrassed by it, because of the king's jealousy and irritation. George IV., it was said, absolutely fancied that it was he who won Wellington's battles; and, influenced by the same kind of delusion, he

The truth is, Mr. O'Connell had no idea of continuing the game of conciliation, except with a view to ulterior objects. He did not conceal, even in the hour of his triumph, that he regarded catholic emancipation as little more than a vantage ground, on which he was to plant his artillery for the abolition of the legislative union. After the passing of the Emancipation Act, he appealed as strongly as ever to the feelings of the people. "At Ennis," he said, "I promised you religious freedom, and I kept my word. The catholics are now free, and the Brunswickers are no longer their masters; and a paltry set they were to be our masters. They would turn up the white of their



DR. DOYLE ("J. K. L.")

imagined that he alone ought to be honoured for the achievement of emancipation, notwithstanding his deep-seated opposition to the measure. This feeling produced misunderstandings and bickerings at Windsor, and the duke endeavoured, by declining the proposed compliment, to terminate these feuds. However, after a good deal of discussion in the ante-room, and impatience on the part of those who attended, the meeting was held, resolutions were passed, speeches were made, including an eloquent one from Thomas Moore, the poet, whose 'Irish Melodies' contributed in no small measure to prepare the English mind for the changes which Wellington effected. This appears to have been the end of the Wellington testimonial.*

eyes to heaven, and at the same time slyly put their hands into your pockets. . . . What good did any member ever before in parliament do for the county of Clare, except to get places for their nephews, cousins, &c.? What did I do? I procured for you emancipation." "The election for Clare," he said, "is admitted to have been the immediate and irresistible cause of producing the Catholic Relief Bill. You have achieved the religious liberty of Ireland. Another such victory in Clare, and we shall attain the political freedom of our beloved country. That victory is still necessary, to prevent catholic rights and liberties from being sapped and undermined by the insidious policy of those men who, *false to their own party, can never be true to us, and who have yielded not to reason, but to necessity, in granting us freedom of conscience.*

* Fagan's "Life of O'Connell," vol. I, p. 695.

sober, moral, and religious people cannot continue slaves—they become too powerful for their oppressors—their moral strength exceeds their physical powers—and their progress towards prosperity is in vain opposed by the Peels and Wellingtons of society. These poor strugglers for ancient abuses yield to a necessity which violates no law, and commits no crime; and having once already succeeded by these means, our next success is equally certain, if we adopt the same virtuous and irresistible means." The Roman catholic prelates, however, seemed to have been satisfied with the achievement of emancipation, and to have received the boon in a very good spirit. There was one of their number who, more than all the rest, had contributed to the success of the work. This was Dr. Doyle, so well known as "J. K. L.," unquestionably the most accomplished polemical writer of his time. Having received his university education in Portugal, he had an opportunity of appreciating the advantages of the British constitution in comparison with others, and when an Irish bishop, even in the midst of agitation, and in all the heat of controversy, he never missed an opportunity of bearing the strongest testimony to its unrivalled excellence. The signature of "J. K. L." represents his name and title, James Kildare Leighton. Under this signature he published "*Letters on the State of Ireland*," "*A Vindication of the Principles of the Irish Catholics*," and other productions, which, for power of argument and eloquence, for profound learning and a lofty moral tone, have never been approached by any of his brethren in Ireland. He maintained an extensive correspondence with liberal statesmen, by whom he was greatly respected, and exerted a boundless influence over his Roman catholic countrymen. He differed from O'Connell in scorning all *finesse* and falsehood, and in being thoroughly disinterested. He was a genuine, truthful man, pure in morals, and elevated in character, genial and affectionate in private life; but firm, and sometimes austere, in his character as a bishop. He resembled the duke of Wellington remarkably in some things, especially in his stern devotion to duty, regardless of consequences to himself or to others. The influence exerted by his writings and his character it is difficult to over-estimate. There is no doubt that it was Dr. Doyle's pen, far more than O'Connell's tongue, that brought round the educated minds of Great Britain to see the justice of catholic emancipation. His examination before the committee of the house of lords, in 1825, would alone have stamped him as a man of extraordinary abilities and attainments, whose talents and learning were consecrated to a high moral purpose—that purpose being the regeneration of his country.

In January, 1830, the catholic bishops assembled in Dublin, to deliberate, according to annual custom, on their own duties and the interests of their church. Dr. Doyle, at the close of these deliberations, drew up a pastoral, to which all the prelates affixed their signatures. It gave thanks to God that the Irish people not only continued to be of one mind, labouring together in the faith of the gospel, but also that their faith was daily becoming stronger, and signally fructifying among them. Having drawn a picture of the discord that had prevailed in Ireland before emancipation, the pastoral went on to say that the great boon

"became the more acceptable to this country, because among the counsellors of his majesty there appeared conspicuous the most distinguished of Ireland's own sons, a hero and a legislator—a man selected by the Almighty to break the rod which had scourged Europe—a man raised by Providence to confirm thrones, to re-establish altars, to direct the councils of England at a crisis the most difficult; to stanch the blood and heal the wounds of the country that gave him birth." The pastoral besought the people to promote the end which the legislature contemplated in passing the Relief Bill—the pacification and improvement of Ireland. It recommended that rash and unjust oaths should not be even named among them, and deprecated any attempt to trouble their repose by "sowers of discord or sedition." The bishops rejoiced at the recent result of the protracted struggle, not more on public grounds than because they found themselves discharged from a duty which necessity alone allied to their ministry—"a duty imposed on us by a state of times which has passed, but a duty which we have gladly relinquished, in the fervent hope that by us or our successors it may not be resumed."*

CHAPTER XVI.

Difficulties of the Government—Distress of the Silk-weavers—Destructive Outrages—The Game Laws—Prorogation of Parliament—The Royal Speech—Condition of Portugal—State of Parties—Disturbances in Ireland—The Meeting of Parliament—National Distress—Breaking up of the Tory Party—Position of the Duke of Wellington—Financial Reform—The Currency—Remission of Taxes—Press Prosecutions—The King's Habits of Seclusion; his Illness; his Last Moments; his Death; his Character; his Patronage of the Fine Arts—Social Progress during the Past Reign—Religious Equality and Free Trade.

THE success of the duke of Wellington in carrying emancipation was fatal to his government. Almost to a man the Tories fell from him, and he found no compensation in the adherence of the Whigs. The latter were glad that their opponents had been induced to settle the question, a result which they had long desired, but had not the power to accomplish. Their gratitude, however, for this great service to the public was not sufficiently warm to induce them to enlist under the banner of the duke of Wellington, though they were ready to come to his assistance, to protect his government for a time against the violent assaults of the party whose feelings and prejudices he had so grievously outraged. All parties seem, indeed, to have been exhausted by the violence of the struggle, and there was no desire to attempt anything important in the way of legislation during the remainder of the session. There was nothing extraordinary in the budget, and it was accepted without much objection. The subject of distress among the operatives gave rise to a debate which occupied two days, and a motion for inquiry into its causes was rejected. The trade which suffered most at the time was the silk trade. It was stated that, in 1824, there were 17,000 looms employed in Spitalfields; now there were only 9,000. At the former period wages averaged seventeen shillings a week, now the average was reduced to nine shillings. By the manufacturers this depression was

* "The Life, Times, and Correspondence of the Right Rev. Dr. Doyle," by William John Fitzpatrick, J.P., vol. ii., p. 183.

ascribed to the relaxation of the prohibitory system, and the admission of foreign silks into the home market. On the other hand, ministers, and the advocates of free trade, ascribed the depression to the increase of production, and the rivalry of the provincial towns of Congleton, Macclesfield, and Manchester. That the general trade had increased was shown by the vast increase in the quantity of raw silk imported, and in the number of spindles employed in the silk manufacture. The government was firm in its hostility to the prohibitory system, and would not listen to any suggestion for relief, except a reduction in the duties on the importation of raw silk, by which the demand for the manufactured article might be augmented. While these discussions were going on in parliament, the silk-weavers were in a state of violent agitation, and their discontent broke forth in acts of lawlessness and destructive outrage. They were undoubtedly in a very miserable condition. It was ascertained that there were at Huddersfield 13,000 persons occupied in a fancy trade, whose average earnings did not exceed twopence-halfpenny a day, out of which they had to meet the wear and tear of looms, &c. The artisans ascribed this reduction to the avarice of their employers, and they avenged themselves, as was usual in those times, by combination, strikes, and destruction of property. In Spitalfields, bands of weavers entered the workshops, and cut up the materials belonging to refractory masters. The webs in thirty or forty looms were sometimes thus destroyed in a single night. The same course was pursued at Macclesfield, Coventry, Nuneaton, and Bedworth, in which towns power-looms had been introduced which enabled one man to do the work of four. The reign of terror extended to Yorkshire, and in several places the masters were compelled to succumb, and to accept a list of prices imposed by the operatives. In this way the distress was greatly aggravated by their ignorance. What they demanded was a restrictive system, which it was impossible to restore. The result obtained was simply a reduction of the duties on raw silk.

An attempt was made during the session to mitigate the evils of the game laws, and a bill for legalising the sale of game passed the commons with extraordinary unanimity. In the house of lords the bill met with determined opposition. In vain lord Wharnccliffe demonstrated the demoralising and disorganising effects of the game laws. Lord Westmoreland was shocked at a measure which he declared would depopulate the country of gentlemen. He could not endure such a gross violation of the liberty of the aristocratic portion of the king's subjects; and he thought the guardians of the constitution in the house of commons must have been asleep when they allowed such a measure to pass. Lord Eldon, too, who was passionately fond of shooting, had his conservative instincts aroused almost as much by the proposal to abolish the monopoly of killing hares and pheasants, as by the measure for admitting Roman catholics into parliament. The bill was read a second time, by a majority of ten; but more strenuous exertions were called forth by the division, and the third reading of this bill to mitigate an iniquitous system was rejected by a majority of two. Lord Eldon's familiarity with the principles of equity did not enable him to see the

wrong of inflicting damage to the amount of £500,000 a year on the tenant farmers of the country, by the depredations of wild animals, which they were not permitted to kill, and for the destruction caused by which they received no compensation.

On the 24th of June parliament was prorogued by commission. The royal speech expressed thanks for the attention that had been given to the affairs of Ireland, and the settlement of the catholic question, which the king hoped would tend to the permanent tranquillity of that country, and to draw closer the bonds of union between it and the rest of the empire. It was announced that diplomatic relations had been renewed with the Porte, for which ambassadors from England and France had taken their departure. But it was with increased regret that his majesty again adverted to the condition of the Portuguese monarchy. He repeated his determination to use every effort to reconcile conflicting interests, and to remove the evils which pressed so heavily on a country the prosperity of which must ever be an object of his solicitude. The condition of that country was, indeed, most deplorable under the lawless despotism of Dom Miguel, who, on the abdication of his brother Dom Pedro in favour of Doña Maria da Gloria, had been appointed regent, but had subsequently assumed the royal title, and driven his niece from the country. He overruled the decisions of the courts of justice regarding political prisoners, and inflicted the punishment of death by his own mere arbitrary order, when only transportation had been decreed by the judges. He crowded the prisons with the most distinguished supporters of constitutional government, confiscated their property, and appropriated it to his own use. So furious was his temper that on one occasion his sister, the late regent, was on the point of being murdered by him with his own hand. Suspecting her of having sent a servant to England with money and jewels, in order to save them from his rapacity, he rushed armed into her chamber, and questioned her upon the subject. She did not reply, and he attempted to stab her with a bayonet, which he had fixed upon a pistol. Evading the thrust, she grappled with the sanguinary tyrant, and threw him down. He sprang up to renew the attack, but her chamberlain, hearing the noise, rushed to her protection, and was stabbed in the arm by the usurper, who then fired at the princess, the shot which was aimed at her killing a servant who stood by her side. Yet we are assured that this monster would have been acknowledged by the duke of Wellington. Mr. Gleig says, "Had the duke been free to follow the dictates of his own judgment, he would have at once resumed the diplomatic relations which had been broken off between the two states. But England was committed to the young queen by the policy of the preceding administration; and the duke, though he believed that policy to be unwise, could not break through it in a moment."* It was not without difficulty, however, that England maintained her neutrality between the contending parties. The Portuguese refugees endeavoured, under various false pretences, to avail themselves of English hospitality, for the purpose of conveying

* "Life of Wellington," p. 467.

arms and ammunition, and bodies of troops into Portugal, in order to restore the queen, alleging that they were sending them to Brazil, but they conveyed them to Terceira, one of the Azores. The consequence was, that 4,000 Portuguese troops, which were lying at Plymouth, were ordered to disband, and captain Walpole, with a squadron, was sent to watch the Portuguese ships in the Atlantic, in order to avoid the imputation of violating the neutrality.

Parliament having been prorogued, the members retired to their respective counties and boroughs, many of them out of humour with themselves and with the government which they had heretofore supported, and meditating revenge. An endeavour was made in the course of the summer to renew the political connection between the duke of Wellington and Mr. Huskisson. The friends of the existing administration felt the weakness of their position, deprived of their natural support, and liable to be outvoted at any time. The tories had become perfectly rabid in their indignation, vehemently charging the duke with violation of public faith, with want of statesmanship, with indifference to the wishes and necessities of the people, and with a determination to govern the country as if he were commanding an army. Their feelings were so excited that they joined in the whig cry of parliamentary reform, and spoke of turning the bishops out of the house of lords. It was to enable the premier to brave this storm that he was induced by his friends to receive Mr. Huskisson at his country house. The duke was personally civil, and even kind, to his visitor; but recollections of the past were too strong with him to permit his going further. Mr. Huskisson was perhaps disappointed at the result, for "his deportment" in the next session, which became keenly and even bitterly adverse, seemed to indicate that he had been led to entertain hopes which were never realised.

The year 1829 was distinguished by disturbances in Ireland, as well as distress in England. The 12th of July, the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne, was celebrated with unusual manifestations of defiance by the orangemen. The country seemed armed for civil war. In the county Clare there was a conflict between the protestants and catholics, in which one man was killed, and seven or eight wounded on each side. In Armagh there was a fight, in which ten men lost their lives. In the county Fermanagh, 800 Roman catholics, armed with scythes and pitchforks, turned out and attacked the protestants, killing four persons and wounding seven. The same party rose in Cavan, Monaghan, and Leitrim, threatening something like civil war. In Tipperary society was so convulsed that the magistrates met, and called upon the government for a renewal of the Insurrection Act, and for the passing of a law rendering the possession of fire-arms a transportable offence.

Such was the state of affairs at home and abroad during the recess of 1829. The government hoped that by the mollifying influence of time the rancour of the tory party would be mitigated, and that by the proposal of useful measures the whig leaders would be induced to give them their support, without admitting them to a partnership in power, and the emoluments of office. But in both respects

they miscalculated. The duke met parliament again on the 4th of February, 1830. It was obvious from the first that neither was tory rancour appeased nor whig support effectually secured. The speech from the throne, which was delivered by commission, was unusually curt and vague. It admitted the prevalence of general distress. It was true that the exports in the last year of British produce and manufacture exceeded those of any former year; but, notwithstanding this indication of an active commerce, both the agricultural and the manufacturing classes were suffering severely in "some parts" of the United Kingdom. There was no question about the existence of distress; the only difference was, as to whether it was general or only partial. In the house of lords the government was attacked by lord Stanhope, who moved an amendment to the address. He asked in what part of the country was it that the ministers did not find distress prevailing? He contended that the kingdom was in a state of universal distress, likely to be unequalled in its duration. All the great interests—agriculture, manufactures, trade, and commerce—had never at one time, he said, been at so low an ebb. The speech ascribed the distress to a bad harvest. But could a bad harvest make corn cheap? It was the excessive reduction of prices which was felt to be the great evil. If they cast their eyes around, they would see the counties pouring on them spontaneously every kind of solicitation for relief; while in towns, stocks of every kind had sunk in value forty per cent. The depression, he contended, had been continuous and universal, ever since the Bank Restriction Act passed, and especially since the suppression of small notes took effect in the beginning of the previous year. Such a universal and continual depression could be ascribed only to some cause, pressing alike upon all branches of industry, and that cause was to be found in the enormous contraction of the currency, the Bank of England notes in circulation having been reduced from thirty millions to twenty millions, and the country bankers' notes in still greater proportion.

The duke of Wellington, in reply, denied that the bank circulation was less than it had been during the war. In the former period it was sixty-four millions, including gold and silver as well as paper. In 1830 it was sixty-five millions. It was an unlimited circulation, he said, that the opposition required; in other words, it was wished to give certain individuals, not the crown, the power of coining in the shape of paper, and of producing a fictitious capital. Capital was always forthcoming when it was wanted. He referred to the high rents paid for shops in towns, which were everywhere enlarged or improved, to "the elegant streets and villas which were springing up around the metropolis, and all our great towns, to show that the country was not falling, but improving." When the duke had replied, the supporters of the amendment could not muster, on a division, a larger minority than nine.

In the house of commons the discussion was more spirited, and the division more ominous of the fate of the ministry. The majority for ministers was only fifty-three, the numbers being 158 to 105. In the minority were found ultra-tories, such as Sir Edward Knatchbull, Mr. Banks, Mr. Sadler, and general Gascoigne, who went into

the same lobby with Sir Francis Burdett, lord John Russell, Mr. Brougham, Mr. Hume, and lord Althorpe, representing the whigs and radicals; while lord Palmerston, Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Charles Grant, and Sir Stratford Canning represented the Canning party. No such jumble of parties had been known in any division for many years. "It was evident," says Sir Archibald Alison, "that the old tory party, so long firm and united, had been completely broken up by the heartburnings and irritation consequent on catholic emancipation, and that the general distress had given the various classes of malcontents a common ground, on which they could unite without abandoning or compromising any of their peculiar and declared principles. The habit of supporting government, and ministerial influence, might give the cabinet a majority over such a coalition for a time, but it could be for a time only; and on the first serious reverse, or occurrence of any internal cause of excitement, it would infallibly be shipwrecked. In truth, the duke of Wellington's position as prime minister, so far from being an enviable one, was among the most critical and painful that could be imagined. He had climbed to the pinnacle of power, but he had there found its loneliness, and experienced its ingratitude. Like Mr. Burke, after his secession from the whigs in 1793, he might have said, 'There is a severance which cannot be healed; I have lost my old friends, and am too old to make new ones.' He had no party in the house of commons, no real colleagues in the cabinet. He was a commander-in-chief there, surrounded by his generals of division, but not a premier aided by the counsels of his followers."*

The liberals seem to have been strongly inclined to the opinion that the duke of Wellington, having won the great victory of emancipation, should retire from the field—that he was not fit to lead the van of progress in parliament. "The prime minister of England," exclaimed Sir Francis Burdett, "is shamefully insensible to the suffering and distress which are painfully apparent throughout the land. When, instead of meeting such an overwhelming pressure of necessity with some measure of relief, or some attempt at relief, he seeks to stifle every important inquiry—when he calls that a partial and temporary evil which is both long-lived and universal, I cannot look on such a mournful crisis, in which the public misfortune is insulted by ministerial apathy, without hailing any prospect of change in the system which has produced it. What shall we say to the ignorance which can attribute our distress to the introduction of machinery and the application of steam, that noble improvement in the inventions of man, to which men of science and intelligence mainly ascribe our prosperity? I feel a high and unfeigned respect for that illustrious person's abilities in the field, but I cannot help thinking that he did himself no less than justice when he said, a few months before he accepted office, that he should be a fit inmate for an asylum of a peculiar nature, if he ever were induced to take such a burden upon his shoulders."

On the 12th of February, Sir James Graham moved for the reduction of the salaries of all persons holding offices under government, in proportion to the enhanced value

of money, produced by the Bank Restriction Act, which added to the weight of all fixed payments, while it lowered wages and the price of provisions. "Hence," he said, "the miserable state to which the people of this country were now reduced, and the necessity for rigid, unsparing economy; and in that system of economy one great source of retrenchment must be the reduction of the salaries of those who had their hands in the public purse. Justice requires, necessity demands it." Ministers did not dare to resist this motion openly. They evaded it by an amendment, which was unanimously adopted, for an address to the king, requesting him to order an inquiry to be made into all the departments of the civil government, with a view of reducing the number of persons employed in the various services, and the amount of their salaries. On the 15th, Mr. Hume attempted to carry retrenchment into the army and navy, moving a resolution to the effect, that the former should be reduced by 20,000 men, and the latter by the sum of a million and a-half. All the reductions he proposed would have effected a saving of eight millions annually. But neither the whigs nor the Canning party were disposed to go such lengths. The motion was, therefore, defeated, the minority consisting solely of radical reformers, who mustered fifty-seven on the division. Another assault on the government was led on by Mr. Poulett Thomson, who moved for the appointment of a committee for a revision of the system of taxation, with a view to saving expense in the mode of collecting the revenue. The motion was resisted by Mr. Peel, on the ground that such important duties should not be delegated to a fraction of the members of the house. The motion was rejected by a large majority. A few days later, however, the ministers sustained a damaging defeat in the committee of supply on the navy estimates. Two young men, who had been public servants for a few months only, Mr. R. Dundas and Mr. W. S. Bathurst, junior commissioners of the navy, had been pensioned off on the reduction of their offices, the one with £400 and the other with £500 a year. The arrangement was attacked as a gross job, and defended upon principle, and the ministers, after mustering all their strength, were beaten by a majority of 139 to 121, on the motion that those pensions should be struck off. Several other motions, brought forward with a view of effecting retrenchments, were rejected by the house. This movement in the direction of financial reform, no doubt, received an impulse from the resentment of the leading whigs, whose claims to take part in the government were ignored by the duke. But this remark does not apply to the efforts of Mr. Attwood and Mr. Baring, who moved that instead of a gold standard, there should be a gold and silver standard, and that the act for prohibiting the issue of small notes should be repealed. They strengthened their case by an appeal to the facts of the existing distress and commercial depression arising from a restricted currency. On the part of the government, however, it was argued that a double standard of gold and silver would cause a loss of five per cent. to creditors, if debtors were to pay in the silver standard—that the whole country would be a scene of confusion and ruin—that silver never was, in practice, the standard of the country, and that it never had been

* Alison, vol. iv., p. 234.

actually in a state to be used as a legal tender. Latterly, the law had enacted that it should not be a legal tender beyond twenty-five pounds. By weight, indeed, it was a legal tender to any amount, but practically it had become so depreciated, that there was no such thing as a standard by weight. Mr. Attwood's resolutions on the currency were negatived without a division.

Though the duke of Wellington defended himself against the persevering attacks of the financial reformers, he was busy making retrenchments in every department of the public service. So effectually did he employ the pruning-hook, that, although the income of the previous year had fallen short of the estimate of the chancellor of the exchequer by £560,000, he was able to present to the house this year a surplus of £3,400,000 available for the reduction of taxation, still leaving an excess of income over expenditure of £2,667,000 applicable to the reduction of debt. There was, consequently, a large remission of taxation, the principal item of which was the beer duty, estimated at £3,000,000. At the same time, in order to enable the chancellor of the exchequer to meet these reductions, an addition of one shilling a gallon was made to the duty on English spirits, and of twopence on Irish and Scotch spirits. This budget helped to clear the political atmosphere, and brought a brief gleam of popularity to the government. The duke got full credit for an earnest desire to economise, and it was acknowledged by the liberal party that he had given the most important financial relief that the nation had experienced since the establishment of peace. Notwithstanding, however, the general satisfaction, and the loud popular applause, the pressure of distress was not sensibly alleviated. The burden, indeed, was somewhat lightened, but what the nation wanted was greater strength to bear financial burdens, a revival of its industrial energies, and facilities for putting them forth with profit to themselves and to the country. Remissions of taxation were but the weight of a feather, compared to the losses sustained by the action of the currency. For while the reductions only relieved the nation to the extent of three or four millions, it was estimated that the monetary laws, by cutting off at least fifty per cent. from the remuneration of all branches of industry, commercial and agricultural, had reduced the incomes of the industrious classes to the extent of a hundred and fifty millions yearly.

Among the other causes which contributed to the unpopularity of the duke of Wellington, and the weakness of his administration, was the prosecution by the attorney-general of Mr. Alexander, the editor of the *Morning Journal*. A series of articles had appeared in that paper, which were considered so virulent and libellous, so far surpassing the bounds of fair discussion, that the duke felt under the same necessity of ordering a prosecution that he had felt to fight the duel with lord Winchilsea. It was regarded as an inevitable incident of his position, one of the things required to enable him to carry on the king's government. He obtained a victory, but it cost him dear: a sentence of fine and imprisonment was inflicted upon his opponent, and the *Morning Journal* was extinguished; but, in the temper of the times, the public were by no means disposed to sympathise with the victor in such a

contest. On the contrary, the victory covered him with odium, and placed upon the head of the convicted the crown of martyrdom. Mr. Alexander was visited daily in the King's Bench Prison by leading politicians, and a motion was made in the house of commons with a view to incriminate the government who ordered the prosecution. In another instance also, but of a nature less damaging, the government received a warning of its approaching downfall. Mr. Peel, anxious to mitigate the severity of the criminal code, and to render it less bloody, proposed to inflict the penalty of death only on persons committing such forgeries as could not by proper precautions be guarded against. It was a step in the right direction; but one too hesitating, and stopping short of the firm ground of sound policy. Sir James Mackintosh, therefore, on the third reading of the bill, moved a clause for the abolition of the penalty of death in all cases of forgery, which was carried by a majority of 151 against 138. Thus the session wore on, in a sort of tantalising parliamentary warfare, with no decisive advantages on either side, till the attention and interest of parliament and the nation were absorbed by the approaching dissolution of George IV., and the dawning light of a new reign.

For many years the king had been scarcely ever free from gout, but its attacks had been resisted by the uncommon strength of his constitution. Partly in consequence of the state of his health, and partly from his habits of self-indulgence, he had for some time led a life of great seclusion. He became growingly averse to all public displays and ceremonials, and was impatient of any intrusions upon his privacy. During the spring of 1829 he resided at St. James's Palace, where he gave a ball to the juvenile branches of the nobility, to which the princess Victoria and the young queen of Portugal were invited. His time was mostly spent within the royal domain at Windsor, where his out-door amusements were sailing and fishing on the Virginia Water, or driving rapidly in a pony phaeton through the forest. He was occasionally afflicted with pains in the eyes and defective vision. The gout attacked him in the hands as well as in the feet, and towards the end, dropsy—a disease which had been fatal to the duke of York, and to his sister, the queen of Wurtemberg—was added to his other maladies. In April the disease assumed a decisive character, and bulletins began to be issued. The duke of Clarence was at Windsor, and warmly expressed his sympathy with the royal sufferer. The duke of Cumberland, and nearly all the royal family, expressed to Sir William Knighton their anxiety and fears as to the issue. This devoted servant was constantly by the side of his master. On the 27th of May Sir William wrote to lady Knighton—"The king is particularly affectionate to me. His majesty is gradually breaking down; but the time required, if it does not happen suddenly, to destroy his originally fine constitution, no one can calculate upon." We are assured that Sir William took every opportunity of calling his majesty's attention to religious subjects, and had even placed unordered a quarto Bible, of large type, on the dressing-table, with which act of attention the king was much pleased, and frequently referred to the sacred volume. A prayer was appointed for public use during his majesty's



ATTACK OF DOM MIGUEL ON HIS SISTER.

indisposition, which the bishop of Chichester read to him. "With the king's permission," wrote this learned prelate, "I repeated it on my knees at his bedside. At the close, his majesty having listened to it with the utmost attention, three times repeated 'Amen,' with the greatest fervour and devotion. He expressed himself highly gratified with it, and desired me to convey his approbation of it to the archbishop of Canterbury."*

About a week before he died, the physician delicately announced to him the inevitable catastrophe, when he said, "God's will be done." His sufferings were very great, and during the paroxysms of pain his moans were heard even by the sentinels on duty in the quadrangle. On the night of the 25th, his difficulty of breathing was unusually painful, and he motioned to his page to alter his position on the couch. Towards three o'clock, he felt a sudden attack of faintness, accompanied by a violent discharge of blood. At this moment he attempted to raise his hand to his breast, and ejaculated, "O God, I am dying!" Two or three seconds afterwards he said, "This is death." The physicians were instantly called, but before they arrived the breath of life was gone. A *post mortem* examination showed ossification of the heart, which was greatly enlarged, and adhering to the neighbouring parts. The liver was not diseased; but the lungs were ulcerated, and there were dropsical symptoms on the skin, on various parts of the body. The king was an unusually large and, at one time, well-proportioned man; but he afterwards became very corpulent. He died on the 26th of June, in the sixty-eighth year of his age and the eleventh of his reign, having been prince regent for ten years. During his last illness the bulletins had been unusually deceptive. The king was anxious to put away the idea of dissolution from his own mind, and unwilling that the public should know that his infirmities were so great; and it was said that he required to see the bulletins and to have them altered, so that he was continually announced as being better till the day of his death. His message to both houses on the 24th of May, however, put an end to all delusion on the subject. He wished to be relieved from the pain and trouble of signing bills and documents with his own hand. A bill was therefore passed to enable him to give his assent verbally, but it was jealously guarded against being made a dangerous precedent. The stamp was to be affixed in the king's presence, by his immediate order given by word of mouth. A memorandum of the circumstances must accompany the stamp, and the document stamped must be previously endorsed by three members of the privy council; the operation of the act being limited to the present session. The three commissioners appointed for affixing his majesty's signature were lord Farnborough, general Sir W. Keppel, and major-general A. F. Barnard.

Various estimates have been formed of the deceased monarch's character, some of them rather flattering. Among these was the portrait drawn of him by Sir Robert Peel. "Posterity," he said, "will regard his late majesty as a sovereign who, during war, maintained the honour and the glory of England, and who, during the whole period of his

delegated trust, or of his reign as sovereign, never exercised, or wished to exercise, a prerogative of the crown, except for the advantage of his people. I am not overstepping the bounds of sober truth, when I state that his majesty was an enlightened friend of liberty, that he was an admirable judge and liberal patron of the fine arts; and I can, from my own personal experience, assert that his heart was ever open to any appeal that could be made to his benevolence, and to the saving of human life or the mitigation of human suffering." To this portrait the duke of Wellington added a few finishing touches. "The manners of George IV.," he said, "had received a polish, his understanding had acquired a degree of cultivation almost unknown to any individual. On every occasion he displayed a degree of knowledge and of talent not often to be expected of a person holding his high office."*

Sir Archibald Alison would be well enough disposed to accept such an estimate, on such authority, if he honestly could. But truth compels him to admit that the late king was selfish, capricious, and self-willed, as the women admitted to his intimacy too fatally experienced. "Supposing his severance from queen Caroline to admit of excuse, from what was afterwards proved of the frailties and indiscretions of that ill-starred princess, his conduct on other occasions, when he chose for himself, and could not plead the Marriage Act in extenuation, was cold-blooded, perfidious, and deserving of the very highest reprobation. Of truth, like other systematic voluptuaries, he was in a great degree regardless—at least, when it interfered with his pleasures or his passions. Self-willed and capricious throughout, he became, as he advanced in life, faithful only to one desire, the common refuge of such characters—he was mainly governed by the love of ease; and to this he sacrificed many objects, which he even regarded as matters of conscience."† The following portrait, by Lord Campbell, is not a bad likeness:—"Possessing great natural advantages, both of person and of intellect, along with his exalted rank, if he could have exercised self-control, he might have been respected and beloved; but, giving way to every inclination and caprice, he disgusted the nation by a gross violation of the duties of domestic life, and he displayed no firmness in maintaining any principles of government. The glories of his regency the people ascribed to the happy auspices of the king, still supposed to be on the throne. From the time that he began to reign in his own right, he had been engaged in the unhappy contest with his wife; and of late years, shut up in his palace, and as much as possible shunning the public gaze, he had been regarded as a heartless voluptuary."‡

The biographer of the duke of Wellington has not been misled by the eulogy of his hero in estimating the moral character of the late king. "He was," says Mr. Gleig, "a man with many faults and few virtues. His intellect was superior to his moral nature, but it was not transcendent. He appears never to have given his undivided confidence to any minister, but always to have aimed at keeping up what he called 'a king's party.' He professed

* "Mirror of Parliament," 1830, pp. 2590, 2642.

† "History of Europe," vol. IV., p. 248.

‡ "Lives of the Chancellors," vol. VIII., p. 521.

* "Memoirs of Sir William Knighton," pp. 352—354.

for the duke of Wellington unbounded love and admiration. That he admired the duke, as meaner natures admire natures that are above them, cannot be doubted; but his love was never such as to prevent him from intriguing and plotting against the object of it. It is beyond dispute that the duke exercised great influence over him; but it was the influence of a superior mind over an inferior." *

It is likely that Mr. Roebuck would have much respect for the character of such a monarch as George IV. He truly remarks that no one now regards his memory with more of personal feeling than if he were one of the Tudors or the Stuarts. "And the fact of this utter absence of every sign or symptom of sympathy towards a powerful monarch, who died comparatively but a few years since, is a damning proof of the worthlessness of the man, who is even now only remembered because he was once a king. To the people," continues Mr. Roebuck, "he rendered the best, the only service of which he was capable, by withdrawing from the world, and shutting himself up in Windsor, with such associates as suited his crapulous tastes and faded desires. Decorum, at least, was maintained by the secrecy which he sought, and the less he interfered with the business of the state the better was his rule. From the great events which occurred while he was regent he derived no honour. He contributed no more to the victories of the duke of Wellington than his father did to the discoveries of Watt. Posterity will regard him simply as a chronological mark, useful as showing when certain great deeds were achieved, but in no other way deriving from them either honour or renown." †

These views of the character of George IV. would not be complete without the masterly sketch of Lord Brougham:—"Naturally of a temper by no means sour or revengeful, he had become selfish to a degree so extravagant that he seemed to act upon the practical conviction of all mankind being born for his exclusive use; and hence he became irritable on the least incident that thwarted his wishes—nay, he seemed to consider himself injured, and thus entitled to gratify his resentment as often as any one, even from a due regard to his own duty or his own character, acted in a way to disappoint his expectations or ruffle his repose. His natural abilities, too, were far above mediocrity. He was quick, lively, gifted with a retentive memory, and even with a ready wit, endowed with an exquisite ear for music and a justness of eye that fitted him to retain refined tastes in the arts; possessing, too, a nice sense of the ludicrous, which made his relish of humour sufficiently acute, and bestowed upon him the powers of an accomplished mimic. But his education was neglected." Lord Brougham continues:—"Notwithstanding the lessons of dean Jackson and the fellowship of Thurlow and Sheridan, he was a man of very uncultivated mind, ignorant of all but the passages of history which most princes read, with some superficial knowledge of the dead languages, and no idea whatever of the rudiments of any science, natural or moral. He was much the creature of impulse, and the sport of feelings naturally good and kind, but had become wholly

selfish through unlimited indulgence. When he entered upon public life he was found to have exhausted the resources of a career of pleasure, to have gained followers without making friends, to have acquired much envy and some admiration among the unthinking multitude of polished society. . . Upon the great question which divided the world, he took part with the enemies of liberty and of improvement. . . When the alarm occasioned by the French revolution had subsided, he gradually came back to the opposition party, and acted with them until his father's illness called him to the regency, when he shamefully abandoned them, flung himself into the hands of their antagonists, and continued to the end of his days their enemy, with a relentless bitterness, a rancorous malignity, which betokened the spite of his nature, and his consciousness of having injured and betrayed those whom therefore he never could forgive. It was, indeed, the singular and unenviable fate of this prince, that he who at various times had more troops of friends to surround him than any man of any age, changed them so often, and treated them so ill, as to survive, during a short part of his life, every one of his attachments, and to find himself before its close in the hands of his enemies, or of mere strangers, the accidental connections of yesterday." *

The services, however, which George IV. rendered to the nation, as the patron of the fine arts and of literature, should not be forgotten. None of the sovereigns of England, from Charles I. down, had distinguished themselves in this way. But George IV. very early exhibited a taste for the fine arts, and a desire for their general cultivation. When prince of Wales, he said, "We have lost the magnificent collection of Charles I.; I will do what I can to supply its place." And when he brought together a series of *chef d'œuvres*, he is said to have observed, "I have not formed it for my own pleasure alone, but to gratify the public taste, and lay before the artist the best specimens of his study." He assisted in establishing and supporting the British Institution and the National Gallery. He was the munificent patron of Lawrence, Wilkie, and other English painters; of Chantry, Westmacott, and other English sculptors; of Nash, Soane, and other English architects. Having become aware that a celebrated enamel painter had died, leaving his widow impoverished, he immediately sent £1,500 for one of the deceased artist's copies. He caused, at his own expense, a monument to be erected at St. Germain, to the memory of James II., and having made comfortable the last years of the last of the Stuarts—cardinal York, at his decease he commissioned Canova, of whom he was a liberal patron, to carve a mausoleum to his memory. He caused the unrivalled statue of the Apollo Belvedere, which had been placed at his disposal, to be conveyed, on the restoration of the treasures of the Louvre, to the gallery from which it had been plundered. He also contributed £500 towards a monument proposed to be erected to do honour to the memory of James Watt. The literary fund was established under his auspices, and supported by him with an annual grant of 200 guineas. He took a lively interest in establishing the Royal Society

* "Life of Wellington," p. 471.

† "History of the Whig Ministry of 1830," vol. I., p. 249.

* Brougham's "Statesmen," second series, vol. iii., pp. 6—11.

of Literature, which he endowed with an annual fund of 1,100 guineas. Since his death the former grant has been reduced to one half, and the latter entirely withdrawn. He presented to the British Museum the fine library of George III., 85,000 volumes of well-selected works, as a free gift to the nation. He established an important precedent in honouring literature, by making its greatest existing ornament, Sir Walter Scott, a baronet; acting on whose advice, he liberally encouraged the earliest attempt to cheapen first-class literature made by an Edinburgh publisher—viz., "Constable's Miscellany." "These are services to his country," remarks the duke of Buckingham, "which ought to neutralise grave faults. But the name of George IV. cannot be dismissed without recalling the long struggle that continued through the greater part of his career, in which the nation came out gloriously—a result fairly to be attributed to his steady support of Lord Castlereagh, who directed the foreign policy of the kingdom, and of the duke of Wellington, who, instructed by this accomplished minister, succeeded in bringing an almost desperate contest to a fortunate issue.*" The remains of George IV. were deposited in the royal vault at Windsor, with the accustomed solemnities, in the evening of the 16th of July.

The two most important and memorable events in the reign of George IV. were the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and the passing of catholic emancipation, which established the principle of religious equality, with certain limitations, deemed necessary for the safety of the constitution. The reign was also remarkable as the beginning of a new era in commercial legislation, when the principles of unrestricted intercourse among nations, which Adam Smith had demonstrated to be most conducive to their mutual benefit, were recognised and acted upon by the British parliament. The marquis of Lansdowne, in the upper house, and Messrs. Huskisson, Robinson, and Poulett Thompson, in the lower, were the most distinguished advocates of the new policy of free trade. In giving effect to this policy, some hundreds of obsolete statutes, relative to commerce, aliens, and denizens, were repealed. The navigation laws were modified, and their restrictive character mitigated; bounties for the encouragement of British fisheries, and of the linen manufacture in Ireland, were abolished. The exportation of wool was permitted, and also the importation of manufactured silks, and other goods. The colonial trade was partly thrown open to foreigners, and the colonies were treated as if they had interests of their own apart from those of the mother country. They were no longer required to bring all that they produced to our market, nor to buy everything they required from us. Thus, although the principles of free trade were not fully embodied in our legislation, though the system of protection was not abolished, important steps were taken in the right direction, and the way was prepared for the future triumphs of the Anti-Corn-Law League. The period occupied by the reign of George IV., therefore, was one of preparation, marked by occurrences which derived their chief importance from their precursory character, and from

the indications which they gave of the near approach of a great social revolution.

CHAPTER XVII.

Accession of William IV.—His Popularity—Mr. Brougham's Eulogy of him—Mr. Roebuck's Estimate of his Character—Queen Adelaide—Address to the King—Whig Tactics—The Regency Question—Lord Eldon's Forebodings—Earl Grey's Motion—Debate in the Commons—Mr. Brougham—The Duke of Cumberland—Lord John Russell—Mr. Brougham's Attack on the Government—Mr. Brougham's Speech on Negro Slavery—Dissolution of Parliament—The French Revolution—Charles X.—The Royal Ordinance Abolishing the Constitution—Suppression of the Public Journals—Remarkable Report on the Power of the Press—Meeting of Journalists—The Insurrection in Paris—Three Days' Fighting in the Streets—The People Victorious—Louis Philippe Elected King of the French—Tremendous Effect of the Revolution on Public Opinion in the United Kingdom—Aristocratic Leaders of the People in Middlesex and Yorkshire—Mr. Hume and Mr. Brougham—The General Election—The Results Unfavourable to the Government—The Duke of Wellington on Pocket Boroughs—Disturbed State of Ireland—O'Connell Challenged by Sir Henry Hardinge—Opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway—Death of Mr. Huskisson—The Duke of Wellington's Objection to Railway Travelling—Mr. Huskisson's Public Career—The Belgian Revolution—Incendiary Fires in England—Unpopularity of the Wellington Administration.

WILLIAM IV. was welcomed to the throne with great acclamation. Called "The Sailor King," he was endowed with many of the personal qualities which make the sailor's character popular with Englishmen. He had been lord high admiral, and in that capacity he had lately been moving about the coasts, making displays and enjoying *fêtes*, although this was thought by some to be unseemly in the heir presumptive to the throne, at a time when its occupant was known to be in a very infirm state of health. Heavy bills connected with these vainglorious displays were sent to the Treasury, which the duke of Wellington endorsed with a statement that such expenses were not allowed. Although opinions differed about William very much, not only between the friends of reform and the conservatives, but between the leaders of the liberal party themselves, he was esteemed the most popular king since the days of Alfred. Mr. Brougham thus contrasted his character with that of the late king:—"I hope," said he, in a debate about the proposed regency, "that elsewhere there is too much magnanimity, too much patriotism, too much manliness, too much strength of mind, to permit the illustrious sovereign now upon the throne to shrink from looking in the face that ultimate termination of his earthly existence from which a recent event may show him that princes, no more than their subjects, are exempt."

It was said that George IV. had an antipathy to Mr. Brougham, and that this was the great obstacle to a coalition between the tories and the whigs; though Mr. Roebuck, in the work which we have before quoted, hints that this opinion was unfounded, or that the impression about the king's feelings was at least exaggerated, and that the real difficulty lay with the duke of Wellington himself. Nothing, however, could be more natural than that George IV. should have an aversion to accept as one of his principal advisers the attorney-general of the late queen, whose scathing denunciations had so often wounded his feelings. Be that as it may, royalty, in his person, never presented itself in a favourable aspect to the mind of Mr. Brougham. It was very natural, therefore, that he should turn with a

* "The Duke of Buckingham's Memoirs," vol. II., pp. 418–420.

feeling of relief to the rising sun; and, having found William IV. as gracious as his predecessor had been hostile, he spoke of the new king with the greatest warmth. Not only then, but all through his subsequent career, lord Brougham has been accustomed to describe William IV. as frank, just, and straightforward; as a sincere reformer, and earnest throughout the struggle which followed the introduction of the Reform Bill in his express desire to have that measure passed in all its integrity. Mr. Roebuck, on the contrary, regarded William IV. as anything but frank, just, and straightforward. He says, "I believe him to have been very weak and very false; a finished dissembler, and always bitterly hostile to the whig ministry and their measure of reform. He pretended to have unbounded confidence in them, and great respect for their opinion, even while he was plotting their overthrow, and adopting every means in his power to hamper them in their conduct, and to depreciate them in the estimation of the world. All the documents I have seen which relate more immediately to the king—and they have been, for the most part, letters written by his command, and at his dictation—have led me to this conclusion. As a looker on, scanning carefully every word, and comparing letters written at different periods, and under very different states of mind, I could not resist the evidence which forced this opinion upon me, though I can well understand why lord Brougham finds it impossible to share it with me. The kindness and generosity of his own nature make him give easy credence to kind professions in others. The off-hand, hearty manner of the king, therefore, imposed upon his chancellor. The very weakness of the king, too, gave him strength. His capacity was notoriously contemptible; and lord Brougham could not for a moment believe himself the dupe of parts so inferior; and yet, in truth, was he deceived."

From this difference of opinion between two such observers and judges of human character, we see how difficult it is to form a correct estimate of the characters of public men, even when they have passed off the stage of life, and their actions have long ceased to affect the interests of contending parties. William was certainly a more exemplary character than his brother. He had indeed formed an attachment to a celebrated actress (Mrs. Jordan), by whom he had a numerous family, one of whom was subsequently admitted to the ranks of the nobility with the title of earl of Munster, and the others raised to the dignity of younger sons of a marquis. He had, however, been married for several years to the princess Adelaide, of Saxe-Meiningen, who became queen of England, and adorned her exalted station by her virtues and her beneficence. They had two children, both of whom died in infancy; and as the king was in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the queen was not young, there was no longer any hope of a direct succession to the throne—a state of things which gave rise to the first contest between parties in parliament. As the demise of the sovereign puts an end to the legal existence of parliament in six months after, and as the usual practice of the constitution is to dissolve immediately, and have recourse to a general election as soon as the state of public business will permit, the consideration of all important questions of general

politics was postponed. The first thing to be done was to move an address to the sovereign, "condoling" with him on the loss he had sustained in the death of his brother, and congratulating him upon his accession. This was moved by Sir Robert Peel, who had now succeeded to the title, his father having died this year, at the patriarchal age of eighty. It was seconded by Mr. Brougham. It was not to be expected that the latter could concur in the extravagant eulogy of the home secretary. But the address condoled with the king "on the loss of a sovereign so justly dear to his majesty and to his people." Mr. Brougham doubtless felt some difficulty in giving his assent to this avowment concerning a prince whom he had himself branded as a "cruel and cowardly despot," and concerning whose character, as we have seen, he did not subsequently change his opinion. At that time, however, "nothing was heard," says Mr. Roebuck, "but a song of praise on the dead and the living. Of the stern voice of truth not a whisper was heard; the language would hardly have been different had the pious Antoninus died, and the philosophic Aurelius succeeded to his virtues and his power." The ministers and their supporters were complimentary, as a matter of course, to the new sovereign, who had graciously continued them in their offices; and the whigs, who had ascribed their exclusion from power to the personal dislike of the king, were resolved that there should not be again any obstacle of the kind, and that they would keep upon the best possible terms with the court. During the previous part of the session, they had kept up a rapid fire of motions and questions upon the government, especially with regard to the public expenditure, the distress of the operatives, and the necessity of rigid economy and large retrenchments. The attacks were led by Sir James Graham, who, though he was always left in a minority in the divisions on his motions, did much to weaken the government by exciting public feeling against them on the ground of their alleged heartless extravagance, while many of the people were starving, and the country was said to be going fast to destruction. Mr. Roebuck believes that the object of these concerted tactics was to force upon the duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel a coalition with the whigs, or rather to punish them for not having sought the alliance. As they seemed to show no disposition to do so, even at this crisis, as they existed only by the sufferance of the whig party, as a general election was approaching, and as before the parliament met again it was quite possible that the throne might be once more vacant, the whigs resolved to make a provision for such a contingency before the dissolution. The duke of Wellington, however, moved an answer to the royal message, declaring that they would forward the measure necessary to provide for the temporary supply required. He suggested that as everybody would be occupied about the coming elections, the best mode of proceeding would be to dissolve at once. Lord Grey, in the name of the opposition, complained of this precipitancy, and delivered a long speech full of solemn warnings of evil. He supposed that the king might die before the new parliament was chosen; the heir presumptive was a child in fact, though not in law. No regency existing, she would be legally in the possession of her full regal power, and this

was a situation which he contended would be fraught with danger. Lord Eldon, smarting under his exclusion from office, was spitefully facetious in his forebodings. The king might die, he argued; the heir presumptive was a child, and the queen might be pregnant. "In illustrating the difficulties of the case," says Mr. Roebuck, "the ex-chancellor excited the wonder of some, the anger of others, and the risibility of many more" by talking about little peers yet unborn; of the house of lords being, by a second Guy Fawkes, blown into the air; and the difficulty of directing the writs in such a case to the new house of lords. The lord chancellor would have to ascertain whether there was any little peer not then visible, but who might be so in due course of time, and until that was determined the title would be in abeyance. He applied this rule to the queen, saying there must be a real or a phantom king, and it was just the same in principle, whether this little king were not able to speak or walk, or whether he were not yet in existence. He said that if he were prime minister, there was nothing he would like better than a little king whom he could play with. Lord Ellenborough's taste was grievously shocked by lord Eldon's anile allusions, and he read him a severe lesson on the proprieties of debate. The anti-catholic party, still retaining their anger, joined lord Grey in condemning the ministerial proposal. A long, unprofitable wrangle ensued, dull repetitions dragged out the debate, when at length the duke wisely refused to accede to the proposition for a useless interval of delay, and proved the numerical strength of the administration." * Lord Grey having moved for an adjournment, to allow time for providing a regency, the motion was lost by a majority of 44, the numbers being 56 against 100. In the house of commons, on the same evening (the 30th of June), Sir Robert Peel moved an address to the same effect. Lord Althorpe, acting in concert with lord Grey, moved the adjournment of the house for twenty-four hours, to allow time for consideration. Mr. Brougham seconded the motion, and touched upon the delicate topic of the civil list—peculiarly delicate, under existing circumstances, as the speaker was the champion of popular rights and the advocate of economy, and, at the same time, in a position which rendered it very likely that he would soon be called to the counsels of his sovereign, and would probably be the next lord chancellor. He then touched upon the still more delicate question of the regency. "The necessity for an arrangement was great and immediate; but there were evidently circumstances connected with it which made every speaker exceedingly cautious, periphrastic, and, indeed, nearly unintelligible, when treating what may be deemed a very plain and not a very difficult matter. A superstitious dislike to make a will or any provisions to take effect after the death of the person so disposing, is by no means uncommon. With many weak people, any discussion or arrangement which proceeds upon the supposition of their death is not only distasteful, but absolutely painful, and with royal personages it is often peculiarly so. The mere contemplation of death has a levelling tendency. The language of Mr. Brougham on

the present occasion proves that he feared lest some weakness of this description lodged in the royal mind, making it dangerous for those who hope to enjoy the royal favour to discourse upon the possibility—nay, the probability—of the king's death. The dexterity of the orator was taxed to find phrases of a nature which, while they were sufficiently explicit, could not frighten or annoy the person to whom they referred." *

The discussion in the commons, however, was not without interest, as it touched upon constitutional questions of vital importance. Mr. Brougham did his part with admirable tact. He dwelt upon the danger of allowing the people to learn that government could go on, and every exigence of the common weal be provided for, without a king. The act which had appointed the late prince regent had been passed without the royal sanction, the king being insane, and no provision having been made to meet the calamity that occurred. The act of parliament was called a law, but it was no law; it had not even the semblance of a law; and the power which it conveyed was in those days called the phantom of royal authority. The fact, indeed, was that the tendency of that act of parliament, more than any other act that had ever been passed by the legislature, was to inflict a blow on the royal authority; to diminish its influence and weight; to bring it into disrepute with, and to lessen it in the estimation of, the people at large; and that fact is in itself a sufficient comment upon the propriety of doing an act of legislation without having the crown to sanction it. That, he said, was his first great and principal reason for proceeding with this question at once. He showed that one of the greatest advantages connected with the monarchical form of government was the certainty of the succession, and the facile and quiet transmission of power from one hand to another, thus avoiding the inconveniences and dangers of an interregnum. The question was rendered more difficult and delicate by the fact that the duke of Cumberland, the most unpopular man in the country, was the eldest of the remaining brothers of the king, and, in the event of his death, he would be heir-presumptive of the throne of England, and actually king of Hanover. In the case supposed, the question would arise, whether the next heir to the throne was of right regent, should the sovereign be incompetent, from infancy, insanity, or any other cause. If that right were established, then the regent, during the minority of the princess Victoria, would be a foreign monarch, and one who was utterly detested by the mass of the people of England. Such a question, arising at a moment when the spirit of revolution was abroad, might agitate the public mind to a degree that would be perilous to the constitution. The contingencies were sufficiently serious, therefore, to justify the efforts of lord Grey and Mr. Brougham to have the regency question settled before the dissolution. They may not have been sorry to have a good popular case against the government, but their conduct was not fairly liable to the imputation of faction or mere personal ambition. "Can we," asked Mr. Brougham, "promise ourselves a calm discussion of

* Roebuck, vol. I, p. 259

* Roebuck, vol. I, p. 262.

the subject when there should be an actual accession of the duke of Cumberland to the throne of Hanover? and parliament are suddenly called upon to decide upon his election to the regency, to the supreme rule in this country, to which, according to the principle of Mr. Pitt, he has a paramount claim, although he has not a strict legal right."

Lord John Russell undertook to explain the real motives for the conduct of the government in this matter. He said:

"When we endeavour to analyse the arguments of

five or six years, it may be overlooked or forgotten by their constituents."

Mr. Roebuck remarks that "the duke of Wellington was in some measure looked upon by both the contending factions as a person that might be of use to them as head of the army. The Tories, therefore, who wish to retain, and the Whigs, who desire to win him, abstained in some degree from personal attacks in his case, but fell, in consequence, with concentrated virulence upon his colleague, whom they both hated and feared." He adds, in a note, that they did not abstain entirely, because "the Whigs



WILLIAM IV.

the right honourable secretary, they amount to this: that it will be for the convenience of honourable members to leave their duties, to abandon their seats, in order to secure to themselves new seats, and to carry on their canvass at the least possible expense; and it will also be convenient for his majesty's ministers, instead of having to deal with members who are about to meet their constituents in a short time, to meet with the members of a new parliament, who, whatever their vote may be on the civil list, or any other question, will hope that, in the course of

wished to make the duke uncomfortable, in the hope of inducing him to relax his determination not to admit them to office. Lord John Russell, in this very debate, as if with reluctance, accused the duke of being guilty of a job." But the charge that was repeatedly urged against the government by him and others was its weakness and incapacity. "I have seen their propositions," said the noble lord, "one after another, if not rejected, so shaken, that they are obliged to throw overboard half the business before the house; and though it may be unpleasant to

them to hear it, I will say one word more: their weakness has been conspicuously shown."

The motion for adjournment was lost by a majority of 46—the numbers being, for it, 139; against it, 185. After this debate, on the motion for adjournment, lord Althorpe moved the amendment to the address, almost in the words of lord Grey in the other house. Sir Robert Peel stated that he meant no disrespect by abstaining from further discussion, which would be wasting the time of the house, by re-urging the arguments he had already employed. Mr. Brougham, however, took the opportunity of launching out against the ministry in a strain of bitter invective, of sarcasm vehement even to fierceness. "Many parts of this evidently unpremeditated attack," says Mr. Roebuck, "were most effective examples of the peculiar style of declamation in which Mr. Brougham so pre-eminently excelled; but, unfortunately for himself, his cause, and his party, his excitement carried him beyond the control of his judgment, and hurried him into the use of expressions which were not justified by the circumstances of the case, and which certainly did not accurately denote the real sentiments of the speaker. After having quelled the impatient house into silence by a contemptuous description of those whose whole powers consisted in inarticulate noises and unmeaning yells, he proceeded to describe the unhappy condition of the ministry, and endeavoured, with great effect, to enlist the pride of the house and the country on his side by alluding to a threat supposed to have been employed by the duke of Wellington that night in the lords—'I will resign if you do not vote with me.' On this threat he descanted in language most happily chosen to express scorn, contemptuous defiance, and bitter indignation. Swept along by the torrent of his own eloquence, he dashed across the channel, and seized on the unhappy minister of Charles X. for the purpose of invidious comparison with the prime minister of his own king. He then, with a prophetic instinct of the fate that was about to befall prince Polignac, warned the noble duke of the consequence of following his fatal example. The good genius of the speaker here deserted him; for he now—excited by the picture which his vivid imagination made almost present to his physical as it was to his mental vision, of the terrible evils which an appeal to force was about to bring upon France, and which, if it were employed, would assuredly be entailed on England also—seemed to believe that there were officious and mischievous supporters advising the ministers to follow the example of M. Polignac. To those imaginary advisers he thus addressed himself:—'You will see in this, as in that country, that the day of force is now over, and that he who would rule his country by an appeal to royal favour or military power may be overwhelmed, may be hurled down by it, if he should entertain such an idea: and I in no wise accuse him of thinking of such an attempt; him I accuse not. I accuse you, I accuse his flatterers, those mean, fawning parasites—'

"Sir Robert Peel rose at once, and, in grave, indignant terms, called the learned gentleman to order. 'I ask the honourable and learned gentleman, as I am one of those sitting on this side of the house, whether

he means to accuse me of being a fawning parasite?'" This induced Mr. Brougham to offer an explanation, and to disclaim any personal reference in these remarks. The division resulted in a majority for ministers of 47.

The question of the regency was again brought forward, on the 6th of July, by Mr. Robert Grant, in pursuance of a motion he had previously given. The unbounded personal popularity of the king—who, unlike his predecessor shut up in exclusion, and resembling Tiberius at Capree, went about sailor-like through the streets, frank, talkative, familiar, good-humoured, delighting the Londoners with all the force of pleasant contrast—rendered the task increasingly difficult and delicate on the part of the opposition to propose any measure disagreeable to a sovereign who was the idol of the multitude, from whom no evil could be apprehended, and whose death, even in the ordinary course of Providence, it seemed something like treason to anticipate as likely to occur within a few months. They were, therefore, "profuse in their declarations of respect, admiration—nay, almost of veneration—for a monarch whom a beneficent Providence had so happily placed upon the throne of these realms. They humbled themselves in the dust when they approached the question—and the prostration was an edifying spectacle—in the month of July, 1830."* The division on Mr. Grant's motion was still more decidedly favourable to the government, the numbers being—Ayes, 93; noes, 247—majority, 154. On the 13th of this month Mr. Brougham delivered his great speech on negro slavery, which produced such an impression upon the public mind that it mainly contributed, as he himself informs us, to his election, a few weeks after, as one of the members for Yorkshire—the proudest position which a parliamentary representative could occupy.† He proposed "that this house do resolve, at the earliest practicable period next session, to take into its serious consideration the state of the slaves in the colonies of Great Britain, in order to the mitigation and final abolition of slavery; and more especially to the amendment of the administration of justice within the same." Mr. Wilmot Horton brought forward a series of resolutions, by way of evading the difficulty. Sir George Murray, the colonial secretary, entreated Mr. Brougham to withdraw his motion, as the public would come to a wrong conclusion from seeing the small numbers that would vote upon it at that late period of the session, and on the eve of a dissolution. Sir Robert Peel pressed the same consideration, but Mr. Brougham persisted, and in a very thin house, the numbers on the division were—Ayes, 27; noes, 56—majority against the motion, 29. This division ended the party struggles of the session. On the 23rd of July parliament was prorogued by the king in person, and next day it was dissolved by proclamation. The writs, returnable on the 14th of September, were immediately issued for a general election, which was expected, and proved to be, the most exciting and important

* Roebuck, vol. I., p. 275.

† Lord Brougham's Speeches, vol. II., p. 132.

political contest at the hustings recorded in the history of England.

The French revolution of 1830 exerted an influence so mighty upon public opinion and political events in England, that it becomes necessary to trace briefly its rise, progress, and rapid consummation. When Louis XVIII. was restored to the throne by the arms of the allies, it was found that he had learned little wisdom in his exile. He was, however, a man of moderation, and affected to pursue a middle course. His successor, Charles X., who ascended the throne in 1824, was violent and bigoted, a zealous catholic, hating the revolution and all its results, and making no secret of his feelings. From the moment he commenced his reign he pursued a course of unscrupulous reaction. At the general election, the prefects so managed as to procure an overwhelming ministerial majority, who immediately resolved to extend the duration of the chamber of deputies to seven years. They next passed a law to indemnify emigrants, for which they voted an annual sum representing a capital of thirty millions sterling. In 1827 the prime minister, Villele, adopted the daring measure of disbanding the national guard, because it had expressed its satisfaction at the defeat of a measure for the restriction of the liberty of the press. He next took the still more dangerous step of dissolving the chamber of deputies. This produced a combination of parties, which resulted in the defeat of the ministerial candidates in every direction. The consequence was the resignation of Villele, on the 5th of January, 1828. He was succeeded by Martignac, whose government abolished the discretionary power of re-establishing the censorship of the press, and adopted measures for securing the purity of the electoral lists against the frauds of the local authorities. They also issued an *ordonnance* on education, guarding society against the encroachments of the Jesuits, and the apprehension of clerical domination. The king, taking alarm at these liberal tendencies, dismissed Martignac and his colleagues, and, in August, 1829, he appointed a ministry exclusively and devotedly royalist, at the head of which he placed prince de Polignac, a bigoted catholic, who, during the empire, had engaged in many wild schemes for the restoration of the Bourbons. This conduct on the part of the king was regarded by the people almost universally as indicating a design to suppress their constitutional liberties, which they resolved to counteract by having recourse to the constitutional remedy against arbitrary power—namely, refusing to pay the taxes. With this object, an association was formed in Brittany, which established a fund to indemnify those who might suffer in resisting the levy of imposts. The press was most unanimous in condemning the new ministry, and by spirited and impassioned appeals to their patriotism and their love of freedom, roused them to a sense of their coming danger. Prince Polignac was charged with the design of destroying the charter; of creating a majority in the chamber of deputies by an unconstitutional addition of aristocratic members; of calling in foreign armies to overawe the French people; and of raising military forces by royal *ordonnances*. The *Moniteur* contained an authorised contradiction of all these

imputations and rumours. At the same time a royalist publication, apparently written under court inspiration, argued that France, wanting an essential element of constitutional government—an independent peerage to protect the throne from democracy—could not be governed without a dictatorship.* France, it was said, was essentially democratic; its peerage existed in name only. There was no gradation of classes, hardly any inequality of property, no corps of sinecurists, or well-paid placemen. In fact, the monarch was insulated, and without any constitutional support. Therefore the writer concluded that the charter should be abolished. Charles was assured, moreover, by the royalists that surrounded him, that there always would be a majority against him in the chamber, no matter who the ministers might be, and that it was impossible to carry on the government under the existing system. He was too ready to listen to such counsels, fondly attached as he was to a superstitious priesthood, privileged orders, tithes, feudal services, and provincial administrations.

The chambers were opened by the king on the 2nd of March, 1830, with a speech which conveyed a threat to the French nation. "If culpable manoeuvres," he said, "should raise up against my government obstacles which I do not wish to foresee, I shall find the power of surmounting them, in my resolution to maintain the public peace, in my just confidence in Frenchmen, and in the love which they have always borne to their kings." The chambers did not hesitate to express their want of confidence in the government. The king having declared that his intentions were immutable, no alternative remained but a dissolution, as he was resolved to try once more whether a majority could be obtained by fair means or foul. In this last appeal to public opinion he was bitterly disappointed; and on the 26th of July he took the desperate step of issuing the royal *ordonnances*, by which the constitution was swept away, and the charter torn up and given to the winds. The *Quarterly Review*, published in May of that year, in a review of M. Cotter's book, uttered an almost prophetic intimation of what followed two months after:—"We think it hardly possible to doubt that, unless the existing government adopts and succeeds in carrying into effect some very decisive measures in the course of the present year, there will ensue another burst of convulsion; and Napoleon has left no saying of more indisputable truth behind him, than 'that a revolution in France is a revolution in Europe.'" Indeed, it scarcely required a prophet to foresee the near approach of some great change; nor could the result of the impending struggle appear doubtful. Nine-tenths of the community were favourable to a constitutional system. Not only the working classes, but the mercantile and trading classes, as well as the professional classes, and all the most intelligent part of the nation, were decidedly hostile to the government. In Paris, the majority against the ministerial candidates were seven or eight to one. The press, with scarcely an exception, was vehement in its condemnation of the policy of the government, which came to the conclusion

* "De la Necessité d'un Dictateur," par M. Cotter.

that it was not enough to abolish the constitution, but that, in order to insure the success of a purely despotic régime, it was absolutely necessary to destroy the liberty of the press, and to put down journalism by force. Accordingly, a report on this subject was addressed to the king, recommending its suppression. It was drawn up by M. Chantelauze, and signed by Polignac and five other ministers. This document bears remarkable testimony to the power of the press. It states that its tendency was no less than to subjugate the sovereignty and to invade the powers of the state. "The pretended organ of public opinion, it aspires to direct the debates of the two chambers; and it is incontestable that it brings into them the weight of an influence no less fatal than decisive. This domination has assumed, especially within these two or three years, in the chamber of deputies, a manifest character of oppression and tyranny. We have seen the journals pursue with their insults and outrages members whose votes appeared to them doubtful or suspected. Let us not fear to disclose here the whole extent of our evils, in order the better to appreciate the whole extent of our resources. A system of defamation, organised on a great scale, and directed with unequalled perseverance, reaches, either near at hand or at a distance, the most humble of the agents of the government. None of your subjects, sire, is secure from insult if he receives from his sovereign the least mark of confidence or satisfaction. A vast net thrown over France envelopes all the public functionaries. Placed in a constant state of accusation, they seem to be in a manner cut off from civil society; only those are spared whose fidelity wavers; only those are praised whose fidelity gives way: the others are marked by the faction to be in the sequel, without doubt, sacrificed to popular vengeance. No strength, it must be confessed, is able to resist a dissolving power so active. The press, at all times, when it has been freed from its fetters, has made an irruption and invasion in the state. One cannot but be singularly struck with the similitude of its effects within the last fifteen years, notwithstanding circumstances, and notwithstanding the changes of the men who have figured on the political stage. Its destiny, in a word, is to re-commence the revolution, the principles of which it loudly proclaimed. Placed and replaced at various intervals under the yoke by the censorship, it has always resumed its liberty only to re-commence its interrupted work. In order to continue it with the more success, it has found an active auxiliary in the departmental press, which, engaging in combat, local jealousies, and hatreds, striking terror into the minds of timid men, harassing authority by endless intrigues, has exercised a decisive influence on the elections. The periodical press has not displayed less ardour in pursuing, with its poisoned darts, religion and its priests. Its object is, and always will be, to root out of the heart of the people even the last germ of religious sentiment. Sire, do not doubt that it will succeed in this, by attacking the foundation of faith, by poisoning the sources of public morals, and by covering the ministers of the altar with derision and contempt. Judicial forms do not easily lend themselves to an effectual repression. This truth

had long since struck reflecting minds; it has lately become still more evident. To satisfy the wants which caused its institution, the repression ought to be prompt and strong; it has been slow, weak, and almost null. When it interferes, the mischief is already done, and the punishment, far from repairing it, only adds the scandal of discussion. The judicial prosecution is wearied out, but the seditious press is never weary. The one stops because there is too much to prosecute; the other multiplies its strength by multiplying its transgressions. At different times prosecutions have had their different appearances of activity or relaxation. But what does the press care for zeal or lukewarmness in the public prosecutor? It seeks in the multiplication of its excesses the certainty of their impunity."

This report was published in the *Moniteur* on the morning of Monday, July 26th. On the same day, and in the same paper, appeared the famous *ordonnances*, signed by the king, and countersigned by his ministers. By the first the liberty of the press was abolished, and thenceforth no journal could be published without the authority of the government. By the second the chamber of deputies, which was to meet in the ensuing month, was dissolved. By the third a new scheme of election was introduced, which destroyed the franchise of three-fourths of the electors, and reduced the number of deputies to little more than one half. Thus the whole constitution was swept away by a stroke of the royal pen. As soon as these *ordonnances* became generally known through the city, the public mind was thrown into a state of violent agitation. The editors and proprietors of twelve journals assembled, and having resolved that the *ordonnances* were illegal, they determined to publish their papers on the following day. A statement of their case, signed by thirty-eight persons, was published in the *Nationale*. They said: "In the situation in which we are placed, obedience ceases to be a duty. We are dispensed from obeying. We resist the government in what concerns ourselves. It is for France to determine how far her resistance ought to extend." In pursuance of this announcement, the journalists were preparing to issue their papers, when the police entered the offices, and began to scatter the types and break the presses. In some of the offices the workmen resisted, and the locks of the doors had to be picked; but no smith could be got to do the work except one whose business it was to rivet the manacles on galley slaves. There was a meeting of the electors of Paris, who quickly decided upon a plan of operations. Deputations were appointed to wait on the manufacturers, printers, builders, and other extensive employers, requesting them to discharge their work-people, which was done, and on the 27th 50,000 men were assembled in different parts of the town, in groups, crying, "*Vive la charte!*" About thirty deputies, who had arrived in town, met at the house of M. Casimir Perier, and resolved to encourage the rising of the people. The troops were under arms; and it is stated that without any provocation from the people except their cries, the military began to sabre the unarmed multitude. The first shot seems to have been fired out of a house, by an Englishman, named Foulkes, who was fired on by the military, and

killed. Alarming reports spread through the city that the blood of the people was being wantonly shed, and that women were not spared. The black flag was raised in various quarters, ominous of the desperate nature of the struggle. The night of the 27th was spent in preparation. The shops of the armourers were visited, and the citizens armed themselves with all sorts of weapons—pistols, sabres, bayonets, &c. In every street men were employed digging up the pavements, and carrying stones to the tops of the houses, or piling them behind the barricades, which were being constructed of omnibuses and *fiacres* at successive distances of about fifty paces. The fine trees of the Boulevards were cut down, and used for the same purpose. The garrison of Paris was commanded by general Marmont. It consisted altogether of 11,500 men. At daybreak on the 28th the citizens were nearly ready for battle. Early in the morning national guards were seen hastening to the Hotel de Ville, amidst the cheers of the people. Parties of cavalry galloped up and down, and occasionally a horseman, shot from a window, fell back out of his saddle. At ten o'clock Marmont formed six columns of attack, preceded by cannon, which were to concentrate round the Hotel de Ville. The insurgents retired before the artillery, and the troops, abandoning the open places, took shelter in the houses and behind barriers. In the meantime a desperate fight raged at the Hotel de Ville, which was taken possession of, and bravely defended by the national guards. Their fire from the top of the building was unceasing, while the artillery thundered below. It was taken and re-taken several times. It appears that hitherto the government had no idea of the nature of the contest. Early in the day marshal Marmont wrote to the king, who was at the palace of St. Cloud: "It is no longer a riot, it is a revolution. It is urgent your majesty should take the means of pacification." Charles sent a verbal answer by an aide-de-camp, urging him emphatically "to be firm, to unite his forces in the Carrousel and on the Place Louis XV., and to act with masses." M. Arago thought that the marshal's heart was never in the cause for which he was fighting, though as a soldier he felt bound to obey. The testimony, however, is conflicting as to the nature of the preparations made by the government to defend the violent course that had been adopted. The natural impression in England was, that those preparations were of the most complete and formidable kind; but the author of a pamphlet on "The Military Events of the late French Revolution," and other French writers supported by the *Quarterly Review*, represent the government as having been wholly unprepared. The journals had proclaimed open war. They declared that the social contract being torn, they were bound and authorised to use every possible mode of resistance, and that between right and violence the struggle could not be protracted. This was on the 26th; but at four o'clock p.m., on the 27th, the troops had received no orders; and when they were called out of barracks shortly after, many officers were absent, not having been apprised that any duty whatever was expected. The night offered leisure to arrange and opportunity to execute all necessary precautions. The circumstances were urgent, the danger obvious and imminent; yet nothing at

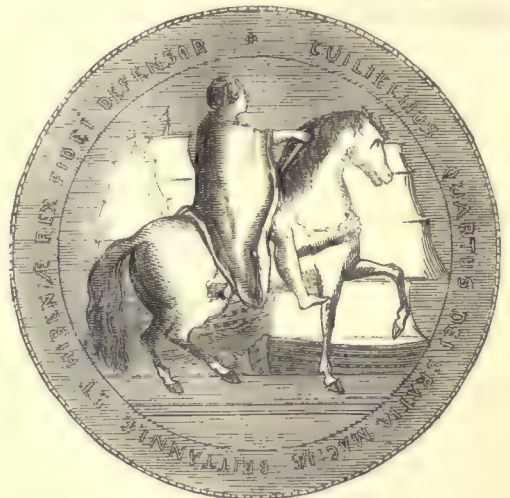
all was done. It is stated that all the circumstances were duly represented to the proper authorities, but nothing was attended to. "Blindness, folly, and fatuity were triumphant. At last, as had been promised on the 26th, ushered by acclamations of '*Vive la charte*,' appeared the tri-coloured flag. The attack and disarming of the detached guard-houses, the capture of the arsenal and of the powder magazine, the disarming of the companies of fusiliers, all took place in a moment. The mob assembled early in the Place de Grèves, in front of the Hotel de Ville, and took possession of it; and all this was done without the slightest opposition, and was all over by eight o'clock, while the troops were still in their barracks."* The contest lasted for three days with varying fortunes. Twice the palace of the Tuileries was taken and abandoned; but on the third day the citizens were finally victorious, and the tri-coloured flag was placed on the central pavilion. Marmont, seeing that all was lost, withdrew his troops; and on the afternoon of the 29th Paris was left entirely at the command of the triumphant population. The national guard was organised, and general Lafayette, "the veteran of patriotic revolutions," took the command. Notwithstanding the severity of the fighting, the casualties were not very great. About 700 citizens lost their lives, and about 2,000 were wounded. It was stated that the troops were encouraged to fight by a lavish distribution of money, about a million francs having been distributed amongst them, for the purpose of stimulating their loyalty. The deputies met on the 31st; and resolved to invite Louis Philippe, duke of Orleans, to be lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He accepted the office, and issued a proclamation which stated that the charter would thenceforth be a truth. The chambers were opened on the 3rd of August; 200 deputies were present; the galleries were crowded with peers, general officers of the old army, the diplomatic body, and other distinguished persons. The duke, in his opening speech, dwelt upon the violations of the charter, and stated that he was attached by conviction to the principles of free government. At a subsequent meeting the chamber conferred upon him the title of the king of the French. He took the oath to observe the charter, which had been revised in several particulars. On the 17th of August Charles X. arrived in England; and by a curious coincidence there was a meeting that day in the London Tavern, at which an address to the citizens of Paris, written by Dr. Bowring, congratulating them on the revolution of July, was unanimously adopted. Meetings of a similar kind were held in many of the cities and towns of the United Kingdom. Feelings of delight and admiration pervaded the public mind in this country: delight that the cause of constitutional freedom had so signally triumphed, and admiration of the heroism of the citizens, and the order and self-control with which they conducted themselves in the hour of victory. Thus ended the revolution of July, 1830. It was short and decisive, but it had been the *finale* of a long struggle. The battle had been fought in courts and chambers by constitutional lawyers and patriotic orators. It had been fought with the pen in newspapers, pamphlets,

* "*Quarterly Review*," vol. xlv., p. 234.

songs, plays, poems, novels, histories. It had been fought with the pencil in caricatures of all sorts. It was the triumph of public opinion over military despotism. To commemorate the three days of July, it was determined to erect a column on the Place de la Bastille, which was completed in 1840.

The effect of the issue upon the state of parties in England was tremendous. The *Morning Chronicle*, then the organ of the whig party, said, "The battle of English liberty has really been fought and won at Paris." The *Times* thundered the great fact, with startling reverberation, throughout the United Kingdom. Mr. Brougham, in the house of commons, spoke of it as that revolution which in his conscience he believed to be "the most glorious" in the annals of mankind, and he expressed his heartfelt admiration, his cordial gratitude to the patriots of that great nation, for the illustrious struggle they were making. This language expresses the feelings which prevailed through all classes of the people of this country, and it

tributed." They contributed very little indeed to the rapid growth of wealth and intelligence among the middle classes, or to the spirit of inquiry which animated a large portion of the mechanics and operatives. The love of freedom burns long in the hearts of the lower ranks of the people before it reaches the aristocratic class; and it never reaches it before great and unsuccessful efforts have been made to extinguish its flames. Some members of the aristocracy, no doubt, naturally sympathise with popular movements and social progress; but it is contrary to the instinct of their order, and it has been found in all ages that, with rare exceptions, aristocratic tribunes wield the power of the democracy as a means of gratifying personal ambition, or promoting the interests of the political parties with which they happen to be identified. Unless Mr. Roebuck misrepresents the party whose history he has studied so well, the whigs, in 1830, finding the people in England discontented with the government, and roused to enthusiasm by the happy result of the great revolution in



GREAT SEAL OF WILLIAM IV.

may be easily supposed that the effect was most favourable to the liberal party, and most damaging to the Tories, especially as the exciting events occurred at the time of the general election; and prince Polignac being considered the particular friend of the duke of Wellington, his ministry was called in France the Wellington administration. All these things were against the premier; the hostility of the anti-catholic party, the alienation of the whigs, the accession of a liberal monarch, and the odium of the supposed intimate relationship with the vanquished despotism of France.

Mr. Roebuck remarks, that "no great move has hitherto been made in England of a political character, unless under the aid and guidance of some portion, and a large portion, of the aristocracy. Whether in 1660, or 1688, or 1830, the popular chiefs belonged to this class, and by their countenance maintained, increased, and directed the popular enthusiasm or feeling which at each epoch they found already existing, but which had been brought about by circumstances to which they had but little if at all con-

France, took advantage of this state of things, and at once assumed the office of leaders of the people, "hoping to turn the popular feeling to their own party benefit." They evidently, he says, knew little of the popular feeling which they sought to lead, and little suspected the strength of the current to which they were about to commit themselves. Not aware of the highly excitable state of the people, they, when they began the contest of the elections, employed language most inflammatory and unguarded, supposing that it would fall on the dull ears of ordinary constituencies. They were startled by the response they received, and began very quickly to be alarmed by their own success.* The aristocratic whig leaders judged of the state of feeling among the masses by the opinions of the narrow circles in which they were accustomed to live—of their own sets and coteries, and especially of the house of commons. Residing most of their time in London, in the midst of the bustle and gaiety of high life; carelessly

* Roebuck, vol. 1, p. 346.



THE COLUMN OF JULY IN THE PLACE DE LA BASTILLE.

glancing through the morning papers, in order to catch up the topics of the day, they had formed a very inadequate conception of the intense earnestness, sound sense, and practical intelligence of the middle classes. The progress that the electors had made in liberality of sentiment was evinced, especially by two of the elections. Mr. Hume, the radical reformer, the cold, calculating economist, the honest, plain-speaking man of the people, was returned for the county of Middlesex without opposition; and Mr. Brougham, a barrister, who owed nothing to family connections—who, by the steadiness of his industry, the force of his character, the extent of his learning, and the splendour of his eloquence, devoted perseveringly for years to the popular cause, had won for himself, at the same time, the highest place in his profession, and the foremost position in the senate—was returned for Yorkshire. These counties had hitherto been the preserves of the great landed proprietors. Lord Fitzwilliam, though the personal friend of Mr. Brougham, did not like this intrusion of a foreigner into that great county. Indeed, it had been sufficiently guarded against all but very wealthy men, by the enormous expense of a contest. In 1826, when a contest was only threatened, and the election ended with a nomination, Mr. John Marshall's expenses amounted to £17,000; and, on a previous occasion, it was rumoured that Lord Milton had spent £70,000 in a contest. Mr. Brougham had good reason, personally, to be a friend of parliamentary reform. It must have been galling, in a man of his spirit and sympathies, to have been, during the whole lengthened period of his political career, the nominee of a whig borough proprietor. After his defeat in Liverpool, in 1812, he was out of parliament for three sessions; but, at the request of earl Grey, lord Darlington brought him in for the borough of Winchelsea. The elections, which began in the end of August, took place in the midst of an excitement such as never before moved—so generally and profoundly—the constituencies of England. The enthusiasm excited by the French revolution was unbounded and universal. The English mind, sympathetic with freedom all over the world, intensely admired the heroism displayed by the Parisians during “the glorious three days,” unstained by a single act of cruelty or of pillage. The press of this country exulted in the fact that it was the literary men of Paris that invoked the spirit of revolution among the people, and restrained it within the bounds of the constitution in the moment of its triumph; and that some of the most distinguished members of the press became ministers of state under a citizen king. It was to be expected that all this excitement should tell decisively on the results of the elections; but the gains of the liberals were more important from the character of the constituencies that came over to their cause than from their number. The greatest of the constituencies, those of them which carried most moral weight, returned the opposition candidates by overwhelming majorities; while not one cabinet minister obtained a seat by anything like a popular election.

The general result of the elections was considered to have diminished by fifty the number of votes on which ministers could depend, and the relation in which they now stood to the more popular part of the representation was stated

to be as follows:—Of the eighty-two members returned by the forty counties of England, only twenty-eight were steady adherents of the ministry; forty-seven were avowed adherents of the opposition, and seven of the neutral cast did not lean much to government. Of the thirteen popular cities and boroughs (London, Westminster, Aylesbury, &c.), returning twenty-eight members, only three seats were held by decidedly ministerial men, and twenty-four by men in avowed opposition. There were sixty other places, more or less open, returning 126 members. Of these only forty-seven were ministerial; all the rest were avowed opposition men, save eight, whose leaning was rather against the government than for it. Of the 236 men then returned by elections more or less popular in England, only seventy-nine were ministerial votes; 141 were in avowed opposition, and sixteen of a neutral cast.*

It was stated positively at the time that the duke of Wellington did not put forth the power of the government in the usual way on this occasion to gain the elections, and that his supporters were rather disheartened. It is not easy to account for this, if it be the fact. He was opposed to parliamentary reform; he hated revolution; but perhaps he was disgusted with party conflicts, or he may have despaired of the issue, and thought it useless to waste his resources on a hopeless contest; and we are assured that he was by no means blind to the abuses which had crept in upon our parliamentary system. He was not averse to close boroughs, which he considered an essential feature of the constitution, “and perhaps the greatest bulwark of imperial government in the abstract;” but he had no patience with the grasping ambition and greed of individuals, which prompted them to buy up borough after borough, and to render themselves thereby all powerful in the legislature. “They are blind,” he used to say, “to their interests, which cannot be separated from those of the state. They do not see that they are perverting to the worst purposes an institution which ought to have been rendered subservient to the best. Instead of having these boroughs so distributed that men of all shades of political opinion, and representing all the great interests of the empire, may, if they possess but talent and character, find their way through them into the house of commons, they go into the market, and purchase up one after another, with no other view than to provide for their own dependants, and promote their own objects. Over and over again it has been pressed upon me to become the proprietor of a borough; but I would have nothing to say to the proposal—I would not dirty my fingers with so vile a job.”†

It is a wonder that so honest a mind as his did not see that a system which, so long as men were ambitious and covetous, would lead to the perpetration of such vile jobs, could not be an essential part of any sound constitution. The duke had little to console him in connection with the general elections. In passing the Emancipation Act he had made great sacrifices, and had converted many of his most devoted friends into bitter enemies. The least that he could expect was, that the great boon which it cost him so much to procure for the Roman Catholics of Ireland would

* “Annual Register,” p. 147.

† Gleig's “Life of Wellington,” p. 470.

have brought him some return of gratitude, and some amount of political support in that country. But hitherto the Emancipation Act had failed in tranquillising the country. On the contrary, its distracted state pointed the arguments of the Tories on the hustings during the Irish elections. O'Connell, instead of returning to the quiet pursuit of his profession, was agitating for repeal of the union, and reviling the British government as bitterly as ever. He got up new associations with different names, as fast as the lord-lieutenant could proclaim them down; and he appealed to the example of the French and Belgian revolutions as encouraging Ireland to agitate for national independence. In consequence of his agitation, many ministerial seats in Ireland were transferred to the most violent of his followers. During these conflicts with the government, Mr. O'Connell was challenged by Sir Henry Hardinge, in consequence of offensive language used by him about that gentleman, who was then chief secretary for Ireland. Mr. O'Connell declined the combat, on the ground that he had a "vow registered in heaven" never again to fight a duel, in consequence of his having shot Mr. D'Esterre. This affair of honour drew upon him from some quarters very severe censure.

On the 15th of September this year the Manchester and Liverpool railway was opened. The ceremony excited great interest, and it would have excited much more if the public of that day could have anticipated the vast expansion during the last thirty years of the system of locomotion of which it may be said to have been the inauguration. It was the first line ever opened for travelling in the British empire. There was much difference of opinion as to the success of the experiment, and vast crowds attended to see the first trains running. The duke of Wellington, Mr. Huskisson, and many persons of the highest distinction, started in the trains, which travelled on two lines in the same direction, sometimes nearly abreast. At Parkside the trains stopped to take in water, and Mr. Huskisson and several of his friends got out. He was brought round to the carriage where the duke of Wellington was seated, who, as soon as he saw him, shook hands cordially with his old colleague. At this moment the other train started, when there was a general cry of "Get in, get in!" There was not time to do this, but Mr. Holmes, who was with Mr. Huskisson, had sufficient presence of mind to draw himself up close to the duke's carriage, by which means he escaped uninjured. Mr. Huskisson, unfortunately, caught one of the doors, which, struck by the train in motion, was swung round, and caused him to fall on the other railway, so that his right leg was passed over and crushed by the engine. The duke of Wellington and others ran to his assistance. The only words he uttered were, "I have met my death. God forgive me!" He was carried to Eccles, where the best medical advice was obtained, but he survived only a few hours, bearing his intense pain with great fortitude. He received the sacrament with Mrs. Huskisson, and his last words were, "The country has had the best of me, I trust it will do justice to my public character. I regret not the few years that might have remained to me, except for those dear ones," he added, grasping Mrs. Huskisson's hand, "whom I leave behind me." He expired a few minutes after. On the 24th he

was interred in the new cemetery in Liverpool, having received the honour of a public funeral, which was attended by an immense concourse of spectators, many of whom were in tears for the tragic end of this eminent statesman, thus cut off so suddenly, on an occasion so joyous, and in connection with an undertaking in which he felt so deep an interest.* The duke of Wellington seems to have been overwhelmed with grief at this catastrophe. "He described it on his return to Walmer as one of the saddest events which, in the course of a career not strange to heart-rending incidents, he had ever witnessed. Indeed, there is some reason to believe that the memories associated with this his first essay were not without their effect in strengthening, if they did not create, that disinclination to railway travelling which adhered to him ever after. Be this as it may, the fact remains that, in spite of the success which attended the Liverpool and Manchester line, the duke never could be persuaded directly or indirectly to countenance the extension of the system in other quarters. When it was proposed, not long afterwards, to connect Southampton with London by rail, he gave to the project all the opposition in his power; and, more characteristic still, he continued in all his journeys to travel post, till the impossibility of finding horses along the deserted high roads of Kent and Hampshire compelled him to abandon the practice."†

Mr. Huskisson had spent an active life in the public service. In 1783, when fourteen years of age, he went to Paris, at the request of his uncle, Dr. Green, then physician to the English embassy. He was present at the taking of the Bastille, and was enthusiastic in the cause of the French revolution. When the British ambassador was recalled, he returned to England in 1792, and got the charge of an office created for investigating the claims of French emigrants. In 1796 he was brought into parliament as member for Morpeth. He was secretary to the treasury under Mr. Pitt's administration in 1802. He successively represented Liskeard, Harwich, and Chichester; and from 1823 till his death he was one of the members for Liverpool. In 1814 he was appointed chief commissioner of woods and forests, and in 1823 he became president of the board of trade and treasurer of the navy. He held the office of colonial secretary, and retained it when Lord Goderich became the head of a new ministry. He seems to have been very fond of official life, and to have felt greatly disappointed and mortified when the duke of Wellington accepted his resignation in May, 1829. He excited the hostility of the protectionists by his efforts to relax the restrictions on commerce, though he was far from going the whole length of free trade. He seldom spoke in parliament, except on commercial subjects. On retiring from office, in 1828, he received one of six pensions of £3,000 a-year each, which the crown had been empowered to grant for long public services, having been nominated by Lord Liverpool before his political demise. He was for many years agent for Ceylon, the salary for which was increased from £800 to £1,200 a-year. A handsome monument, with a statue by Gibson, was erected to his memory by his constituents in

* Huskisson's Life, vol. i., pp. 234-240.

† Gleig's "Life of Wellington," p. 475.

the new cemetery at Liverpool. A second statue was placed in the Royal Exchange, and another, also by Gibson, in Lloyd's rooms, London. His speeches were published in three volumes, with a biographical memoir, in 1831.

Napoleon's saying about French revolutions was verified in 1830. The shock of the political earthquake was felt throughout the Continent, and severed Belgium from Holland. The inhabitants of Brussels began their revolt by resistance to local taxes, and ended by driving the Dutch garrison out of the city, and proclaiming the independence of Belgium. The duke of Wellington had no difficulty about the prompt recognition of the *de facto* government of France. The change of dynasty had not been officially communicated to him many hours when he sent instructions to the English ambassador to enter into friendly relations with the new government. He had not, however, the same facility in recognising the independence of Belgium. He had been instrumental in establishing the kingdom of the Netherlands; and he regarded the union as being a portion of the great European settlement of 1815, which ought not to be disturbed without the concurrence of the great powers by which it was effected. This hesitation on his part to hail the results of successful revolution added to his unpopularity. In the meantime a dangerous spirit of disaffection and disorder began to manifest itself in the south of England. Incendiary fires had preceded the revolution in France, especially in Normandy, and they were supposed to have had a political object. Similar preludes of menaced revolution occurred during the autumn in some of the English counties nearest the French coast, in Kent, Sussex, Surrey, and Hampshire. Night after night, in the most fertile districts, the sky was reddened with the blaze of burning stack-yards. Crowds of the working classes, complaining of want of employment, went about through the country, breaking the threshing-machines, which had then come into extensive use. The government were compelled to employ force to put down these disturbances—a fact which supplied inflammatory arguments to agitators, who denounced the duke of Wellington as the chief cause of the distress of the working classes. Such was the state of things when the new parliament met on the 26th of October.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The New Parliament—Mr. Manners Sutton, Speaker—The Royal Speech: Intense Excitement produced by it—Reform—Earl Grey's Manifesto—The Duke of Wellington's fatal Declaration against Reform—Mr. Brougham's Notice of Motion on Reform—Lord Winchelsea's Attack on the Government—Mr. Hume—Mr. O'Connell—Public Excitement—The Metropolitan Police—Alarm in London—Preparations for Insurrection—The King advised not to attend the City Banquet—Consequent Odium of the Government—The Duke determines to retire from Office—The Civil List—Defeat of the Government—Resignation of Ministers: their Reasons for the Step—Mr. Brougham's Motion postponed—Mr. Roebuck's View of Mr. Brougham's Position and Conduct at this Crisis—Mr. Brougham becomes Lord Chancellor—Lord Grey's Administration—Ministerial Statement—Policy of the New Government—The Duke of Wellington out of Office: Despairs of the Country: his gloomy Predictions—Disturbances in the South of England—Special Commissions—Seditious Agitation—Distress in Ireland—Mr. Sheil on the Repeal of the Union—Lord Cloncurry on the Emancipation Act—Lord Anglesea again Irish Viceroy: his Reception—Prosecution of O'Connell: he pleads Guilty, and escapes Judgment—The Game Act.

THE new parliament met on the 26th of October. Mr.

Manners Sutton was again chosen speaker of the house of commons, having already presided over four successive parliaments, occupying a period of fourteen years, during which he performed the onerous duties of his high position to the satisfaction of all parties. A week was occupied in the swearing-in of members. All the preliminary formalities having been gone through, the parliament was opened by the king in person on the 2nd of November. The royal speech, which was of unusual length, excited the deepest interest, and was listened to with breathless attention and intense anxiety. The old house of lords was closely packed with eager listeners; every one seeming to feel that the most momentous issues depended upon the proceedings that were thus inaugurated. "Every paragraph that was uttered," says Mr. Roebuck, "was received as a declaration of war. The clear and distinct enunciation, the high, shrill voice of the king, gave a disagreeable effect to the words, as they fell on the ears of the many thoughtful men who listened to these important statements; for these words might be the signal for great and disastrous commotion. Triumph was on the countenance of the ministerial phalanx, and depression visible in the bearing of the opposition." The concluding paragraph of the speech, while expressing the strongest confidence in the loyalty of the people, intimated the determination of the government to resist parliamentary reform. This attitude was regarded as a defiance to the opposition; and it roused into excitement the spirit of hostility, which might have been disarmed by a tone of conciliation, and by a disposition to make moderate concessions. Nothing, therefore, could have been more favourable to the aims of the whig leaders than the course taken by the administration; and if they wanted an excuse for breaking forth into open war, it was supplied by the imprudent speech of the duke of Wellington. The royal speech, indeed, suggested revolutionary topics to the reformers, by its allusion to continental politics. The king observed that the elder branch of the house of Bourbon no longer reigned in France, and that the duke of Orleans had been called to the throne. The state of affairs in the Low Countries—namely, the separation of Belgium from Holland—was viewed with deep regret; and "his majesty lamented that the enlightened administration of the king of the Netherlands" should not have preserved his dominions from revolt; stating that he was endeavouring, in concert with his allies, to devise such means of restoring tranquillity as might be compatible with the welfare and good government of the Netherlands, and with the future security of other states.

Earl Grey was not slow to avail himself of these exciting topics in order to point the lightning of popular discontent against the head of the government. "We ought," he said, "to learn wisdom from what is passing before our eyes; and, when the spirit of liberty is breaking out all round, it is our first duty to secure our own institutions, by introducing into them a temperate reform. I have been a reformer all my life; and on no occasion have I been inclined to go farther than I am prepared to go now, if an opportunity were to offer. But I do not found the

title to demand it on abstract right. We are told that every man who pays taxes—nay, that every man arrived at the years of discretion—has a right to vote for representatives. That right I utterly deny. The right of the people is to have a good government, one that is calculated to secure their privileges and happiness; and if that is incompatible with universal, or very general suffrage, then the limitation, and not the extension, is the true right of the people."

This speech, which was regarded as the manifesto of the reform party, called forth a reply from the duke of Wellington, which was pregnant with revolution, and which precipitated the downfall of his administration. He said:—"The noble earl Grey has recommended us not only to put down these disturbances, but to put the country in a state to meet and overthrow the dangers which are likely to arise from the late transactions in France, by the adoption of something like parliamentary reform. The noble earl has stated that he is not prepared himself to come forward with any measure of the kind; and I will tell him further, neither is the government. Nay, I will go farther, and say that I have not heard of any measure up to this moment which could, in any way, satisfy my mind, or by which the state of the representation could be improved, or placed on a footing more satisfactory to the people of this country than it now is. I will say that I am thoroughly convinced that England possesses at this moment a legislature which answers all the good purposes of a legislature, in a higher degree than any scheme of government whatever has ever been found to do in any country in the world; that it possesses the confidence of the country; that it deservedly possesses that confidence; that its decisions have justly the greatest weight and influence with the people. Nay, I will go yet farther, and say that if at this moment I had to form a legislature for any country, particularly for one like this, in the possession of great property of various descriptions, although perhaps I should not form one precisely such as we have, I would endeavour to produce something which would give the same result; namely, a representation of the people containing a large body of the property of the country, and in which the great landed proprietors have a preponderating influence. Further still, I beg to state that not only is the government not prepared to bring forward any measure of this description, but, in so far as I am concerned, while I have the honour to hold the situation which I now do among his majesty's counsellors, I shall always feel it my duty to oppose any such measures, when brought forward by others."

The scene in the house of commons during the debate on the address was still more animated and exciting. It is thus graphically described by Mr. Roebuck:—"No one incident was so important and startling as the closing announcement made by the duke of Wellington in the lords; but the variety, the general excitement, the skilful debating of Sir Robert Peel, the vigorous and eloquent sallies of Mr. Brougham, the eager curiosity of all to learn from the commons of England the feelings of the people of England, the importance of the crisis, the danger and the turbulence abroad and at home—all these things made

that a memorable night in the annals of our parliament. So soon as the house assembled, and before the speaker read the speech which had been delivered from the throne, Mr. Brougham made the first and a significant move in the great game that was about to be played, by announcing that he would that day fortnight submit to the house a proposition on the great question of parliamentary reform. Well skilled in all the forms of parliament, an admirable adept in all those arts which, by means of manner and expression, lend importance and give effect to every act performed, every word spoken in a deliberative assembly, Mr. Brougham seized upon the opportunity offered him by the proposal of some formal vote, to give, in a deliberative and solemn manner, notice of a motion upon which he knew, and the world knew, the fate of the ministry might ultimately depend. The tone of his voice, the settled gravity of his demeanour, when he rose on that memorable occasion, riveted every eye upon him who was now the great popular chief. Having determined to give notice of his intention when there was a question before the house, he was enabled to accompany his notice with an explanation. This was his explanation:—"He had," he said, "by one party been described as intending to bring forward a very limited, and therefore useless and insignificant, plan; by another, he was said to be the friend of a radical, sweeping, and innovating, and, I may add, for I conscientiously believe it would prove so, a revolutionary reform." Both these imputed schemes he disavowed. "I stand on the ancient way of the constitution." To explain at that moment what the details of this plan were to be would have then been inconvenient—was, indeed, impossible. "But," said Mr. Brougham, "my object in bringing forward this question is not revolution, but restoration—to repair the constitution, not to pull it down." This notice was a master-stroke of policy. It chimed in exactly with the excited feelings of the people. Its disclaimers and its apparent positive declarations were alike directed to enlist on the side of the speaker the largest possible number of adherents. He spurned a sham reform; he was careful to guard against violent and dangerous change. He won to his proposition all the old affections, the love for the ancient forms and substance of our institutions, by declaring that he stood on the ancient ways of the constitution; while, by vaguely disclaiming the imputation of limited views, by declaring that he must have something large and effective, he gave a licence to the imaginations of those more ardent minds who hoped to attain some wide concessions to the popular party, and who desired to establish a regular symmetrical plan for electing throughout the empire the representatives of the people. Confining himself to wide generalities, he really committed himself to nothing. Whatsoever his actual scheme might have been, it would strictly have satisfied the terms of his notice, while it might have disappointed every expectation raised by that artful announcement."

The duke of Wellington's declaration against reform had all the effect of an arbitrary prohibition thrown in the way of a violent passion. The effect was tremendous; a revolutionary flame was kindled everywhere at the same instant, as if the whole atmosphere—north, south, east, and

west—was wrapt in a sheet of electric fire. No words from any statesman in English history produced such an impression: The transports became universal; all ranks were involved; all heads, save the strongest and most far-seeing, were swept away by the torrent of excitement. John Bull's patience was gone. Parliamentary reform was right; the time was come when it should be granted; and no man, not even the duke of Wellington, should be allowed to withstand the nation's will. The unpopularity of the duke with his own party swelled for the moment the current of the movement. High churchmen declared that reform would raise a barrier against papal aggression, which they felt to be necessary, as experience had shown that the existing constitution afforded no security. The old tories, in their resentment on account of the concession to the catholic claims, appeared to be ready to support the popular demands, if by so doing they could mortify or overthrow the government. The population of the towns, intelligent, active, progressive, longed for parliamentary reform, because they believed it would remove the impediments which retarded the advancement of society. There were only two classes of the community who were believed at the time to be opposed to the reform movement: first, the aristocratic whigs, because parliamentary reform would destroy the influence by which they had for a century after the revolution governed the country; but their accidental position as popular leaders obliged them for the time to go with the current. Second, the class to whom Mr. Cobbett applied the term "borough-mongers," including all those who had property in parliamentary seats, and could sell them, or bestow them, as they thought proper. The former, it was argued, were obliged to conceal their attachment to the old system, which had secured to a few great families a monopoly of government and its emoluments. The latter had become so odious to the nation, that their opposition availed little against the rapid tide of public feeling, and the tremendous breakers of popular indignation.

There are times when a firm mind, a great character, planted in the front of danger, by taking a determined stand in a commanding position, can turn back the tide of aggression, and change the fortunes of the day. The duke of Wellington had done that more than once, both as a general and a statesman. He attempted to do it again on this supreme occasion, and signally failed. "I must be allowed," said lord Winchelsea, the champion of the tory interest, "to say, that if the assertion of the noble duke made on a former night, relative to parliamentary reform, was framed with a view of conciliating and gaining the support of the noble and high-minded persons with whom he had been usually united, I can tell the noble duke he might as well attempt to take high heaven by storm. These are times of danger and peril, in which we require to see efficient men at the head of the government of the country. Now we see the consequence of having given up a great question—not upon the ground of justice and equity—but upon the ground of fear. So far from creating confidence, the yielding up of that question has created a feeling of distrust in the minds of the people. They no longer rely on the government to afford them redress or to

mitigate their sufferings; they know that the ministry will grant nothing but upon compulsion. I am one of those that feel the necessity of having competent men at the head of the administration, in the present situation of the country; and I feel bound to say that those who comprise the higher branches of his majesty's government at this moment are not, in my opinion, worthy of the confidence of the people in this hour of imminent peril."

When it fared thus with the government amongst the tories in the upper house, where it had found support and shelter from the blasts of popular anger, little mercy was to be expected for it in the assembly which now represented the feeling out of doors. Mr. Hume, representing the radical party, objected to the royal speech, because, lengthy as it was, "the people of England were left out." He objected to it because, though there were nine paragraphs on foreign politics, there was only one upon economy. Through him spoke the great county of Middlesex, with its millions of intelligent and energetic population. Mr. O'Connell also wielded against the government the fierce democracy of Roman catholic Ireland. Sir Robert Peel had irritated him by some contemptuous remarks on his repeal agitation, and he rose in his own defence, like a lion in his fury. "At once he proudly separated himself from the house, while repelling a personal calumny. He scornfully declared that he had more constituents than all his majesty's ministers taken together. They had all shrunk from populous places, and taken refuge in rotten boroughs; they had shown in the speech, he said, an utter disregard to the distress of the people, both in England and Ireland. He endeavoured to demonstrate, by dissecting the royal speech, that the ministers were in their hearts the friends of despotism wherever it might be found—whether in the character of Dom Miguel of Portugal, prince Polignac and Charles X. in France, king William in Belgium, the Turks in Greece, or the orangemen in Ireland. He employed all his great powers to win the favour of the people of England. He placed their demands in the van of his army, and brought in the demands and complaints of his own country only as the necessary consequence of those principles which he had established and invoked on behalf of the English nation."* He then proceeded to give a description of the condition of Ireland, "which," said Mr. Brougham, "if not magnified in its proportions, if not painted in exaggerated colours, presents to my mind one of the most dismal, melancholy, and alarming conditions of society ever heard of or recorded in any state of the civilised world." Mr. O'Connell thus addressed the treasury bench:—"Tell the people of Ireland that you have no sympathy with their sufferings, that their advocate is greeted with sneers and laughter, that he is an outlaw in the land, and that he is taunted with want of courage, because he is afraid of offending his God. Tell them this, and let them hear also in what language the secretary of state, who issued the proclamation to prevent meetings in Ireland, has spoken of Polignac." A powerful defence of his system of peaceful agitation, and a fierce defiance and denunciation of the existing adminis-

tration, closed this remarkable speech, whose effect upon the house, Mr. Roebuck says, was great and unexpected. Its effect upon the Roman catholics of Ireland, it need not be said, was immense. Indeed, the perusal of the debates, in connection with the royal speech, threw the whole United Kingdom into a ferment of agitation. Public meetings were held to express indignation at the anti-reform declaration of the duke of Wellington. Petitions were presented, pamphlets were published, harangues were

the old body of watchmen, in whose time thieves and vagabonds pursued their avocations with comparative impunity. The new force, as may be supposed, was the object of intense hatred to all the dangerous classes of society, who had organised a formidable demonstration against the police, and the government by which the force was established, on Lord Mayor's Day. Inflammatory placards had been posted, and handbills circulated, of the most exciting and seditious character, of which the fol-



QUEEN ADELAIDE, CONSORT OF WILLIAM IV., IN HER CORONATION ROBES.

delivered, defiance was hurled from every part of the country. It was under these circumstances that the king was invited to honour the city with his presence at the lord mayor's banquet, which was to be held on the 9th of November, the day on which the new lord mayor enters upon his office. It has been the custom for a new sovereign to pay this compliment to the city, and William IV. was advised by his ministers to accept the invitation. The new metropolitan police force had been recently established. It was a vast improvement upon

lowing is a specimen:—"To arms! Liberty or death! London meets on Tuesday next; an opportunity not to be lost for revenging the wrongs we have suffered so long. Come armed; be firm, and victory must be ours. . . . We assure you, from ocular demonstration, 6,000 cutlasses have been removed from the Tower for the immediate use of Peel's bloody gang. Remember the cursed speech from the throne—these — police are to be armed. Englishmen! will you put up with this?"* Appeals of this

* "Annual Register," pp. 159, 160.

kind, and sinister rumours of all sorts, industriously circulated, created the greatest alarm throughout London. It was reported that a conspiracy of vast extent had been discovered—that society was on the eve of a terrible convulsion—that the barricades would immediately be up in the Strand, and that there would be a bloody revolution in the streets. The inhabitants prepared as well as they could for self-defence. They put up iron blinds and shutters to their windows, got strong bolts to their doors, supplied themselves with arms, and resolutely waited for the attack. So great was the public consternation, that the funds fell three-and-a-half per cent. in two hours. This panic is not a matter of so much astonishment when we consider that the three days' fighting in the streets of Paris was fresh in the recollection of the people of London. The lord mayor elect, alderman Key, had received so many anonymous letters, warning him of confusion and riot if his majesty's ministers should appear in the procession, that he became alarmed, and wrote to the duke of Wellington, pointing out the terrible consequences of a nocturnal attack by armed and organised desperadoes in such a crowded city as London. The duke, thinking the danger not to be despised, advised the king to postpone his visit. Accordingly, a letter from Sir Robert Peel, as home secretary, appeared posted on the Exchange on the morning of the 9th. The multitude of sight-seers, disappointed of their pageant, were excited beyond all precedent, and execrations against the government were heard on every side. In fact, this incident, concerning which no blame whatever attached to the ministers, exposed the duke of Wellington and his colleagues to a hailstorm of popular fury. The two houses of parliament hastily met, in a state of anxiety, if not alarm. Unable to restrain their feelings until the arrival of ministers to give explanations, they broke forth into vehement expressions of censure and regret. "Why," they asked, "did ministers advise the king to accept the invitation? Did they not know that such a pageant would bring a number of dangerous characters together, and that disturbance would be almost inevitable? But having promised, why did they disappoint the people? The king was popular, and had nothing to apprehend. If there was to be rioting, it would be caused by the hateful presence of the ministers. Why did they not stay away? Why did they thus risk the peace of the metropolis, and by that the peace of the whole community?" Addressing the ministers, the opposition demanded, "Why have you done this? For a selfish end; your own unpopularity was so great, that you could not appear among the people without running the chance of being hooted, perhaps pelted; and in order to turn from yourselves the odium attendant on such a disaster, you have unjustly, most ungenerously, endeavoured to make the king share the ill-feeling which belonged to yourselves alone. Your duty was to have retired from the pageant—to have said to his majesty, 'You, sire, can go to the city amidst your affectionate people with perfect safety, and loud acclaim. We should mar the scene by our obnoxious presence, and shall therefore beg your majesty's permission not to attend you on this occasion.'" If such a course had been pursued, nothing would have

resulted except one more proof, added to the number already existing, and quite sufficient for all practical purposes, of the extent and bitterness of the popular feeling against the present administration. As the conversation proceeded in the house, its acrimony increased. Ministers at length said, "If we be, as you say, thus unpopular and unworthy of confidence, why not subject us and our conduct to the proper and constitutional test, by submitting a motion to this house for an address to the crown praying for our dismissal?"*

Mr. Brougham regretted the appearance of Sir Robert Peel's letter. "I regret it," he said, "on account of the mischief which it is certain to cause in the mercantile world, and still more from the connection which it has with the fatal speech from the throne, and the still more fatal speech of the duke of Wellington against every species of reform—a declaration to which, I conscientiously believe, he owes nine-tenths of his present unpopularity. I wish that I had not lived to see the day when a forgetfulness of the invaluable services in the field, which have won for the duke of Wellington as a soldier, a general, and a conqueror, a great, brilliant, and imperishable renown, coupled with the deviation by the noble duke from his proper sphere into the labyrinth of politics,—I wish to heaven I had not lived to see the day when the forgetfulness of the people of the merits of the soldier, and the forgetfulness of the soldier of his own proper sphere of greatness, displayed to England, to Europe, and to the world, that he cannot accompany his majesty on his journey into the heart of an attached and loyal population."

It was quite evident that a ministry assailed in this manner, and left almost without defenders in parliament, while the public out of doors were so excited against them, that no act of theirs could give satisfaction or inspire confidence, could not long remain in office. Accordingly, they made up their minds to retire on the first opportunity. Three important questions stood for discussion, on any one of which they were sure to be defeated. The duke selected the question of the civil list. In the royal speech his majesty surrendered the hereditary revenues of the crown to the disposal of parliament. The opposition could see no merit in that, and Lord Grey contended that those revenues were not private but public property, assigned by the state for the purpose of maintaining the dignity of the sovereign, and that from this purpose they could not be alienated. The debate came on upon the 12th of November, when the chancellor of the exchequer moved that the house do resolve itself into committee on the civil list, the scheme which he brought forward fixing the amount to be settled at £970,000. Several of the details in this scheme were objected to, and on the following day Sir H. Parnell moved, as an amendment to the resolutions of the chancellor of the exchequer, that a select committee be appointed to take into consideration the estimates and accounts printed by command of his majesty regarding the civil list. After a short debate the house divided, when the numbers were—for the amendment, 293; and against it, 204, giving a majority of twenty-nine against the govern-

ment. Mr. Hobhouse immediately asked Sir Robert Peel whether ministers intended to retain office, after this expression of the sentiments of the house. To which he gave no answer at the time; but the next day the duke in the upper house, and Sir Robert in the lower, announced that they held their offices only till their successors were appointed. The defeat was brought about, in a great measure, by the former supporters of the ministry. "The blow was struck, and none recoiled from it more immediately than the section of angry tories who were mainly instrumental in delivering it. They had achieved their purpose, and stood aghast, for no time was lost with the duke in placing his resignation in the hands of the king."*

The duke of Wellington endeavoured to persuade himself, and to make the public believe, that parliamentary reform had nothing to do with his retirement. "I was defeated," he said, "on the civil list; in short, the government was placed in a minority. Upon that occasion, parliamentary reform had no more to do, as far as I was concerned, with the resignation than anything else in the world. I admit I resigned next morning, because I did not wish to expose his majesty and the country to the consequences that might result from the government going out on the success of the question of parliamentary reform."† Sir Robert Peel, however, admitted in the house of commons, on July 20th, 1831, that though they retired on the civil list question, with regard to which they were in a minority, yet it was impossible to deny that the anticipation of the probable manifestation of opinion on the question of reform in the house entered into the consideration of the government. The truth is, Mr. Brougham had a notice of motion on the book on the subject of parliamentary reform for the very day on which the ministers resigned. When he went to the house he was aware that lord Grey had been sent for, and he hastened to let them know that the change of ministry would make no difference with regard to his motion. If the house thought it more convenient to have the discussion postponed, he was satisfied. He threw himself "fully, freely, and respectfully upon the house," though if the motion was put off, it would be contrary to his opinion and feelings. "I beg it, therefore," said the learned gentleman, "to be understood, that if I yield, I do so in deference to the wishes of the house. And further, as no change that may take place in the administration can by any possibility affect me, I beg it to be understood that in putting off the motion, I will put it off till the 25th of this month, and no longer. I will then, and at no more distant day, bring forward the question of parliamentary reform, whatever may be the condition of circumstances, and whosoever may be his majesty's ministers."

Mr. Roebuck, in commenting upon this speech, expresses his opinion that if Mr. Brougham really desired to obtain office, that desire was, in his position, natural and praiseworthy. By the indefatigable exercise of his great powers, he had materially strengthened the whigs, and by the same powers he had placed himself at the head of the great popular party out of doors. He had been triumphantly returned for one

of the greatest constituencies in England. He was the foremost debater in the house of commons, and the recognised leader of the opposition. The question with him was, whether he could retain his proud position as the great popular chief, and yet hold office in a whig administration. The expressions employed by him seemed to Mr. Roebuck to say that he had decided the question in the negative, and that he resolved to forego all expectation of place. When, again, on the succeeding evening, the learned gentleman reiterated the assertion that he had no connection with the new administration, many persons believed more firmly than before that his resolution was fixed to be the great popular chief, and to separate himself from all mere party ties. As everything connected with the principal actors in this great revolution is full of interest for the people of our own time, and will no doubt continue to be so for posterity, our readers will be glad to have the reflections of so sagacious an observer as Mr. Roebuck upon the position and motives of a statesman so eminent, and whom he so greatly admired, as lord Brougham. "But there were others," he says, "who put a very different interpretation upon these eager professions of a disregard of office. They said that these voluntary denials were the offspring of a vehement desire for place, and a fear lest he should be passed over—that his motion was insisted on in order to make the in-coming party feel his great power, and their own utter inability to conduct the government without his friendly aid, which aid would not be given unless he was himself accepted as one of the great chiefs of the coming administration. The result seemed, in some degree, to justify this last description. The history, nevertheless, of the whole transaction, as related by those who were the chief actors in the scene which they described, accounts very differently for all that occurred. Lord Grey, up to the last hour of his life, remained in apparently friendly and cordial relations with Mr. (afterwards lord) Brougham; and their joint description of the circumstances under which Mr. Brougham consented to give up his great independent position, and become, in fact, one of the leaders of the whig government, places in a strong light the many difficulties of Mr. Brougham's position, and may probably induce posterity to judge of the course which he determined to pursue with more of favour and leniency than the violent prejudices of party permit his contemporaries to exhibit. Subsequent events, which severed the old party ties, have so mutually embittered the minds of all the chief actors in these memorable scenes, that an unprejudiced judgment from them respecting the conduct of those with whom they acted we may look for in vain; and passion so distorts the memory, as well as the judgment, that an accurate statement of facts seems as difficult of attainment as a just appreciation of the facts when related. At every step we are met with contradictions with respect to the events as they are said to have occurred. We need not wonder to find conclusions at variance with each other, when the premises on which they rest are thus unsettled."

According to one account of these transactions, lord Grey, when he received the king's commands to form an administration, acted on the conviction that he could not

* Gleig, p. 478.

† "Mirror of Parliament," 1831, p. 1,200.

proceed with any hope of success without the co-operation of Mr. Brougham. The king had no objection to accept him as one of the ministers, and he was named in the list as master of the rolls, it being assumed that Sir John Leech was to become lord chancellor of Ireland, with a peerage, and that Mr. Plunket was to be lord chancellor of England. To this arrangement, however, it is said, the king peremptorily objected. It was stated that then Mr. Brougham was offered the attorney-generalship, which he "calmly" refused, upon which lord Grey declared that his hopes of being able to form an administration were at an end, and he waited on his majesty for the purpose of communicating to him the failure of his negotiations. "Why so?" inquired the king. "Why not make him chancellor? Have you thought of that?" The answer was "No; your majesty's objection to the one appointment seemed to preclude the other." "Not at all, not at all," replied the king; and the reasons for one appointment and against the other are said to have been very clearly stated by his majesty. Mr. Brougham seems to have been left in the dark for some time about the intentions of lord Grey, for on the 17th of November he said he had nothing to do with the administration, except in the respect he bore them, and as a member of the house. On the 19th he presented petitions, and spoke on them in the commons, without intimating any change of position. Hence it may be easily supposed that he surprised the world, as well as his friends, by suddenly appearing on November the 22nd in the house of lords as lord chancellor of England. This was certainly a great office to which he was elevated, and for which the exigencies of party made him necessary; but, in accepting it, he sacrificed a great position which seemed to gratify all the desires of intellectual ambition; and, in order to induce his compliance, lord Grey was obliged to appeal to his generous sympathies, his public spirit, and his devotion to his party. Two noble friends reasoned with him on the 19th in the following manner:—"If you refuse, lord Grey will finally declare to the king that he is unable to form a cabinet. The whole whig party will ascribe this evil as the result of your selfishness. That very circumstance upon which you insist as your chief pride, and which gives you your present power and importance—viz., the representation of Yorkshire—will only belong to you for the present parliament. A contest at the next election will be inevitable, and your whig friends will be either hostile or lukewarm. The enormous expense of a Yorkshire election is beyond the power of your purse, and you will have, therefore, to return, if you can find one, to some presentation borough or populous town. Your proposed measure, too, of reform will never be so likely to succeed as by the endeavours and under the auspices of a government pledged to bring forward and support some large scheme of parliamentary reform. As the chancellor of such a ministry, you will be called upon to render a service to the cause of reform which no other man can render, and which you cannot render in any other character. We see, and we acknowledge, the personal sacrifice we ask you to make. We know that if you simply look to personal considerations, if you think only of your own influence apart from all considerations of the public good, you will remain in the

house of commons, and wield the great power which your singular abilities confer upon you as a member of that house. But we appeal to higher motives, asking you to think less of yourself and more of your country, and to adopt that course which will give effect to the principles which during your whole political life you have endeavoured to advance.' This argument, thus skilfully employed, produced the effect desired, and Mr. Brougham passed almost directly from the bar of the house, at which he had as counsel been engaged when this argument was used, to the woolsack, and took his seat as lord chancellor before the patent which created him a peer was made out."*

The celebrated reform ministry consisted of the following members:—In the cabinet: first lord of the treasury, earl Grey; lord chancellor, lord Brougham; chancellor of the exchequer and leader of the commons, lord Althorp; president of the council, marquis of Lansdowne; lord privy seal, earl of Durham; home secretary, lord Melbourne; foreign affairs, lord Palmerston; secretary of the colonies, lord Goderich; first lord of the admiralty, Sir James Graham; president of the board of control, Mr. Charles Grant; postmaster-general, duke of Richmond; chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, lord Holland; without office, lord Carlisle. Not in the cabinet: president of the board of trade, lord Auckland; secretary at war, Mr. C. W. Wyna; master general of ordnance, Sir James Kempt; paymaster-general of the forces, lord John Russell; lord chamberlain, duke of Devonshire; lord steward, marquis Wellesley; master of the horse, lord Albemarle; groom of the stole, marquis of Winchester; first commissioner of land revenue, Mr. Agar Ellis; treasurer of the navy, Mr. Poulett Thompson; attorney-general, Sir T. Denman; solicitor-general, Sir W. Horna. In Ireland: lord lieutenant, marquis of Anglesea; lord chancellor, lord Plunket; commander of the forces, Sir John Byng; chief secretary, Mr. Stanley; attorney-general, Mr. Blackburne; solicitor-general, Mr. Crampton. In Scotland: lord advocate, Mr. Jeffrey; solicitor-general, Mr. Cockburn.

The saying of lord Grey, that he would stand by his order, has been often quoted as characteristic of his aristocratic spirit. He certainly did stand by it on this occasion, for his cabinet could scarcely have been more aristocratic than it was. It consisted of fifteen members, of whom thirteen were peers, or sons of peers, one was a baronet, and one an untitled commoner.

The ministerial statement was anticipated with great interest. It was delivered by the new premier, on the evening of the 22nd, Mr. Brougham presiding as lord chancellor. Foremost and most conspicuous in his programme was the question of parliamentary reform; next, economy and peace. Having gone in detail through the principles of his policy, and the reforms he proposed to introduce, the noble lord summed up all in the following words:—"The principles on which I now stand, and upon which the administration is prepared to act, are—the amelioration of existing abuses; the promotion of the most rigid economy in every branch of the public expenditure;

and lastly, every endeavour that can be made by government to preserve peace, consistent with the honour and character of the country. Upon these principles I have undertaken an office to which I have neither the affectation nor presumption to state that I am equal. I have arrived at a period of life when retirement is more to be desired than active employment; and I can assure your lordships that I should not have emerged from it, had I not found—may I be permitted to say thus much without incurring the charge of vanity or arrogance?—had I not found myself, owing to accidental circumstances, certainly not to any merit of my own, placed in a situation in which, if I had declined the task, I had every reason to believe that any attempt to form a new government on principles which I could support would have been unsuccessful. Urged by these considerations, being at the same time aware of my own inability, but acting in accordance with my sense of public duty, I have undertaken the government of the country at the present momentous crisis."

The duke of Wellington was a strong-minded man, yet even he experienced the marvellous influence of position on men's views of public affairs. Having given up the seals of office, he retired to Walmer, where from his quiet retreat he looked out upon the troubled political horizon; and nothing could be more gloomy than his anticipations. According to his biographer, visions of the darkest hue were continually present. "He saw the political unions in England and Scotland acquiring from day to day more perfect organisation and a wider influence. In Ireland, Mr. O'Connell appeared to be raised above the control of law; and the government, though it obtained a verdict of sedition against him, shrank from inflicting the penalty which the law awarded. All this seemed, to the duke's excited imagination, to indicate that the new cabinet was prepared to go to the utmost lengths, in order to conciliate the democracy; on which, indeed, and on which alone, he conceived that it would be driven in the end to rely. Nor were the prospects which met him while contemplating the condition of the continent, and the probable line to be taken by England in dealing with foreign powers, more satisfactory. 'I do not see how these men are to carry on the government,' he used to say, 'so as to maintain order at home or peace abroad. It is very well for Lord Grey to talk about standing out for reform, retrenchment, and non-intervention. Reform, as he calls it, he may or may not get; retrenchment I'll defy him to carry farther than we have done, unless he sacrifices the great institutions of the country; and as to non-intervention—with all the sympathies of his party enlisted on the side of democracy—that is, in his case, impossible. Mark my words, you'll see the Belgian insurrection taken up, and a French army in the Netherlands before many months are over; and then if Austria, Russia, and Prussia move, what is to save Europe from a renewal of scenes which no man who has once taken part in them would ever desire to witness again?' 'But they are acting rigorously in the matter of the rural disturbances, at all events, and Mr. Stanley seems determined to stop the agitator's career in Ireland.' 'They are doing in the rural districts the work which we

had begun and handed over to them; but what do you say to their intimacy with the political unions? Do you think they will be able to lay the storm which they have raised in Birmingham, Leeds, and Glasgow? or prevent it from sweeping away all the safeguards of the constitution? As to O'Connell, depend upon it that whatever Mr. Stanley may wish to do, Mr. Stanley's masters have other uses to make of the great O. than to gag him.'"

The duke of Wellington took too much credit to himself for his efforts in preserving the peace of the country. Lord Grey declared that when he entered office in November, 1830, he found the counties round London in open insurrection, and that no measures had been taken by the late government to put down these disturbances. This was true so far as incendiary fires were concerned. A system of outrage commenced in Kent before the harvest was fully gathered in. The disturbers of the peace did not generally assume the form of mobs, nor did they seek any political object. Threatening letters were circulated very freely, demanding higher wages and denouncing machinery, and the attacks of the rioters were directed entirely against private property. In the day armed bands went forth, wrecking mills and destroying machinery, especially threshing machines. At night, corn-stacks, hay-ricks, barns, and farm-buildings were seen blazing in different parts of the country. Even live stock were cruelly burned to death. In addition to this wholesale destruction, the rioters plundered the houses of the farmers as they went along. These disorders extended into Hants, Wilts, Bucks, Sussex, and Surrey, and they continued during the months of October, November, and December. In fact, life and property in those counties were, to a great extent, at the mercy of lawless men. Lord Grey lost no time in announcing his determination to punish sternly those disturbers of the peace, and to restore at every cost the dominion of law and order. He would give his most anxious attention to measures for the relief of distress, but it was his determined resolution, wherever outrages were perpetrated or excesses committed, to suppress them with vigour. In pursuance of this determination, two special commissions were issued to try the offenders. They finished their painful duties early in January. On the 9th of that month judgment of death was recorded against twenty-three persons, for the destruction of machinery in Buckinghamshire. In Dorset, at Norwich, at Ipswich, at Petworth, at Gloucester, at Oxford, at Winchester, and at Salisbury, large numbers were convicted of various outrages; altogether, upwards of 800 offenders were tried, and a large proportion of them capitally convicted. Only four, however, were executed; the rest were all sentenced to various terms of transportation or imprisonment. The prosecutions were conducted with firmness, but with moderation, and they were decidedly successful in restoring public tranquillity.

The middle classes at that time, bent on the acquisition of parliamentary reform, were anxious that the movement should be conducted strictly within the bounds of legality, and without producing any social disorders. There was,

however, a class of agitators who inflamed popular discontent by throwing the blame of the existing distress on machinery, on capitalists, and on the government. This course of conduct served to encourage mobs of thieves and ruffians both in town and country, who brought disgrace upon the cause of reform, and gave a pretext for charging the masses of the people with a lawless spirit and revolutionary tendencies. Another class of agitators, chiefly old Tories, were prophets of evil, full of forebodings of national calamity, ever dwelling on the ruin that impended over all the national interests, and, before all, upon the agricultural interest. Even the duke of Wellington, as we have seen, yielded to this desponding spirit, and indulged in the gloomiest apprehensions as to the future of England, from the moment he passed into the cold shade of opposition.

In Ireland there was severe distress prevailing over an extensive district along the western coast—no unusual visitation, for the peasantry depended altogether on the potato, a precarious crop, which sometimes failed wholly, and was hardly ever sufficient to last till the new crop came in. The old potatoes generally disappeared, or became unfit for human food in June, and from that time till September the destitution was very great, sometimes amounting to actual famine. There was a partial failure of the crop in 1830, which, coupled with the rack rents extorted by middle men, gave to agitators topics which they used with effect in disquieting the minds of the peasantry.

The Irish viceroy appointed by lord Grey was the marquis of Anglesea. The interval between his two viceroys extended over a period of nearly two years, during which the duke of Northumberland was at the head of the Irish government. The manner in which relief was granted to Roman Catholics, expressly as a concession to violence wrung from the fears of the legislature, confirmed the wildest notions of the people with respect to their own power. The offensive exclusion of O'Connell by the terms of the Emancipation Act deprived the concession of much of its grace and power of conciliation. Lord Cloncurry states that it is scarcely possible to doubt that had the Relief Act not been framed with the express design of excluding Mr. O'Connell, he would have quietly taken his seat; "and if he had not settled down into the ease of the bench of justice, he would have pursued a course of constitutional exertion for the social and political improvement of Ireland." It is not likely, however, that any seat on the bench, except that of the lord chancellor, would have satisfied the great agitator. Had he, the foremost lawyer, the great popular chief, been treated in the same manner as lord Brougham, who had occupied the corresponding position in England, Ireland might have been spared a whole generation of pernicious agitation. But the creed of O'Connell precluded this, as the Emancipation Act expressly provided that no Roman Catholic could be lord chancellor. This very fact, that a Roman Catholic lawyer, however eminent, could not rise to the highest place on the bench, was a source of irritation, as fixing upon Roman Catholics the brand of inferiority. In consequence of the securities with which the Emancipation Act was associated, the latter part of the year

1829 and the whole of 1830 were miserably distinguished in Ireland by party conflicts and outrages. To the government of the country thus torn and convulsed, lord Anglesea was again called in December of the latter year, and, considering his antecedents, no appointment was likely to prove so popular. "Nevertheless," says lord Cloncurry, "neither support nor forbearance was accorded to lord Anglesea. From the moment when it was known that he was re-appointed, he was treated by the demagogues as an enemy. And the extraordinary progress of liberalism made during his lieutenancy must in candour be set down to the account of his courage and perseverance, in fighting the cause of the people against both themselves and their enemies." On the eve of his departure for Ireland, he wrote to lord Cloncurry, saying, "O'Connell is my *avant courier*. He starts to-day with more mischief in hand than I have yet seen him charged with. I saw him yesterday for an hour and a half. I made no impression upon him whatever; and I am now thoroughly convinced that he is bent upon desperate agitation. All this will produce no change in my course and conduct. For the love of Ireland, I deprecate agitation. I know it is the only thing that can prevent her from prospering; for there is in this country a growing spirit to take Ireland by the hand, and a determination not to neglect her and her interests; therefore I pray for peace and repose. But if the sword is really to be drawn, and with it the scabbard is to be thrown away—if I, who have suffered so much for her, am to become a suspected character, and to be treated as an enemy—if, for the protection of the state, I am driven to the dire necessity of again turning soldier—why, then, I must endeavour to get back into old habits, and to live amongst a people I love in a state of misery and distress." In a subsequent letter to the same nobleman, he states that he had received a number of affectionate letters, warning him not to go to Ireland, that he would set his life upon a cast, or that if he did go he should enter Dublin quietly and secretly; on which he remarked, that they might as well propose to him to mount a balloon. He would proceed unostentatiously but publicly to Dublin Castle. But he besought lord Cloncurry to see to it, that no friend of his should come forward to mix himself up with his "*unpopularity*." He adds, "What a term for me to make use of amongst Irishmen! Let me alone, I shall like to meet their hostile ebullitions alone and unattended. It will be curious enough to contrast the first days of 1829 with the last days of 1830, and the whole change of sentiment to be upon the plea of a solitary law appointment. My particular desire is neither to attract notice nor to avoid it, and most particularly that not one single friend shall put himself forward to share with me the fortunes of the day; and therefore, my dear good lord, stay at home, and you shall hear that I am not less patient and enduring with the hostile and deluded people than I am feelingly alive to the cheers of an affectionate one."

Notwithstanding these apprehensions, the reception actually given to lord Anglesea was not at all so disgraceful to the country as he was led to anticipate. Mr. O'Connell kept out of the way; but a numerous assemblage of the most respectable citizens greeted his arrival at Kingstown,



LORD JOHN RUSSELL INTRODUCING THE REFORM BILL.

and escorted him to Dublin Castle, lord Cloncurry and lord Howth riding at the head of the procession. The populace confined the expression of their feelings to a few groans for "Dirty Doherty," whose promotion to the chief seat of the court of common pleas was the alleged offence of lord Anglesea. He was scarcely a week in Ireland, however, when O'Connell opened the repeal campaign. A meeting of the trades of Dublin had been arranged for the 27th of December, to march in procession from Phibsborough to his residence in Merrion Square, to present him with an address of thanks for his advocacy of a domestic legislature. Sworn informations having been laid before the lord-lieutenant to the effect that serious disturbances were apprehended from this procession, he issued a proclamation on Christmas-day, forbidding it under the act for the suppression of dangerous associations or assemblies. Mr. O'Connell therefore issued a notice, countermanning the meeting. On the 4th of January, Mr. O'Connell sent a deputation to lord Cloncurry to ask him to preside over a repeal meeting, which he declined. "Those who knew Mr. O'Connell," writes his lordship, "who recollect what a creature of impulse he was, how impatiently he bore with any difference from his opinions, and what a storm was the first burst of his wrath, will not wonder at what followed. Three very long letters were immediately issued, especially devoted to the business of vituperating me, but with ample digressions maledictory of lord Anglesea. I was a renegade, an aristocrat born and bred, a thinking patriot; it was a matter of doubt whether my heart was of stone or a human heart; and, worse than all, I was the friend of Algerine Anglesea." In a few days, he adds, the fever was brought to a crisis by the arrest of Mr. O'Connell and his agitation staff, "after a brisk pursuit through a labyrinth of ingenious devices, whereby he sought to evade the law, in the course of which it was found necessary to discharge five or six proclamations against him. To-day, Mr. O'Connell's audience and *claqueurs* were termed The Society of the Friends of Ireland of all Religious Persuasions. To-morrow, they were The General Association of Ireland for the Prevention of Unlawful Meetings, and for the protection and exercise of the sacred right of petitioning for the redress of grievances. Then, again, they were a nameless body of persons, in the habit of meeting weekly at a place called Home's Hotel; and as the hunt continued, they successively escaped from each daily proclamation under the changing appellations of The Irish Society for Legal and Legislative Relief; or the Anti-Union Association; The Association of Irish Volunteers for the Repeal of the Union; The Subscribers to the Parliamentary Intelligence Office, Stephen Street; until finally they were fairly run down at a breakfast party at Hayes' Hotel."

At length, then, after all his marvellous doublings, O'Connell was hunted into the meshes of the law. He was convicted of sedition, having pleaded guilty, but was not called up for judgment. This was made a charge against the government; with how little reason may be seen from the account of the matter given by lord Cloncurry. The time at which he should have been called up for judgment did not arrive till within a month or two of the expiration of the statute under which he was convicted, and which

he called the "Algerine Act." Under these circumstances, lord Cloncurry strongly urged upon the viceroy the prudence of letting him escape altogether, as his incarceration for a few weeks, when he must be liberated with the expiring act, "would only have the appearance of impotent malice, and, while it might have created dangerous popular excitement, would but have added to his exasperation, and have given him a triumph upon the event of his liberation that must so speedily follow."*

CHAPTER XIX.

Political Unions—Meeting of Parliament—The Reform Committee: its Report—The Scheme of Reform submitted to the King—The Budget—Agitation on the Reform Question—Excitement in the House of Commons on the Introduction of the Measure—The Principles of the Bill—Lord John Russell—Debates on the First Reading—Arguments in Favour of the Measure—Mr. Macanlay—Virtual Representation—Evils of Political Monopoly—Inefficacy of Coercion—Influence of the Aristocracy—Scotland—Ireland—Increase of Electors under the Reform Bill—New Constituencies—Astonishment caused by the Sweeping Changes—Anecdote by Lord Brougham—Arguments against the Bill—Sir Robert Inglis—Alleged Utility of Rotten Boroughs—Peacemen in Parliament—The First Reading of the Bill—State of Parties—Reformers and Conservatives—"The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill"—Mutual Intolerance—Petition of the Glasgow Operatives—Petition of the London Bankers and Merchants—Doleful Predictions as to the Destructive Effects of Reform—The Second Reading of the Bill carried by a Majority of One—Terrific Pressure from Without—General Gascoyne's Motion—Defeat of the Government—The King's Objection to a Dissolution—Stopping the Supplies—Mr. Stanley—The Irish Reform Bill—Impatience of the Lords—Lord Wharnccliffe—Appeals to the King—The Lord Chancellor—The King's Timidity and Vanity—Interview of Lord Grey and Lord Brougham with the King—Extraordinary Scenes in the Lords and in the Commons—The Dissolution.

On the 1st of February, 1831, the Birmingham Political Union held its anniversary. It had been established some years, for the purpose of agitating for reform, organised somewhat on the principle of the Irish Catholic Association, and exerting a mighty influence on public opinion in the northern counties. Mr. Attwood stated that at this time it had on its books 9,000 members, paying from 4s. to £2 2s. a-year each. Other unions of a similar kind were established in many of the cities and towns throughout the kingdom.

On the 3rd parliament assembled, and the nation was full of expectation as to the measures of the government. The great question of the day was understood to have been under their anxious consideration during the winter. It subsequently transpired that the measure of reform contemplated by lord Grey at the close of the year was far more moderate than the one which was brought forward by lord John Russell. The material increase in the amount of concession was said to be chiefly owing to the growing demands of the people, enlightened by the discussions in the political unions. Lord Durham was believed to be the most advanced liberal in the cabinet, and to have most strenuously insisted on the necessity of a very liberal measure. "The first disposition of my mind," said lord Grey, on the 28th of March, "certainly was to limit the reform within a much narrower compass; but after full consideration, and after having discussed the

* "Personal Recollections of Lord Cloncurry," pp. 418—421.

subject with my colleagues, I was convinced that nothing short of the present measure was likely to lead to the satisfactory result of fulfilling the wishes of all classes, and of giving to the government security and respect." The king is believed to have given his consent most reluctantly to any measure of reform, however moderate. The one proposed he regarded as dangerously extensive, and but for the apprehension of popular commotion, he would have got rid of a subject which was extremely distasteful to him by dismissing the whig ministry. He had been greatly offended by the discussions on the civil list, and he appealed to the law officers of the crown to know whether the house of commons had the power of doing what their committee recommended with respect to certain salaries. This matter left a soreness on his mind towards lord Grey, and some other members of the government. He was so finished a dissembler, however, that it is said he made them believe that they enjoyed his personal favour, while they were the objects of his most inveterate hate. At all events, they had to contend with his unmitigated, though disguised hostility, in the whole course of the discussions on the reform bill. In order that the measure might be well matured, and might fully meet the wants of the country, lord Grey appointed a committee to consider the whole subject, and report upon it to the cabinet. This committee consisted of his son-in-law, lord Durham, who was intimately acquainted with his own views; lord John Russell, who had represented the whig party in the house of commons in the various proposals that he had made on the subject of reform; Sir James Graham, who enjoyed the confidence of the advanced liberals, and was considered something more than a whig; and lord Duncannon, who was supposed to be well acquainted with the Irish corporations. According to the general instructions given to the committee, they were to prepare the outlines of a measure, which should be sufficiently comprehensive to meet the demands of public opinion, so as to extinguish the desire for further change. But it must rest upon property as its basis, and be connected with existing territorial divisions. He wished that the prerogative of the crown should be in no degree diminished, that the peers should lose none of their rights or privileges; but that saving these, the democracy should play its due part in the legislation and government of the country—that the house of commons should really represent its intelligence, its feelings, and its property. The committee began to work earnestly as soon as the administration was definitely organised. They first calmly and amicably discussed the principles involved in the measure, then the details were separately and minutely examined, and when a point was decided and agreed upon it was recorded in writing by lord Durham. Lord John Russell furnished the materials for schedules A and B, which were supplied to him by coadjutors, who were labouring diligently out of doors facilitating the work. There was a secret history about those schedules, and imputations were freely cast upon the committee of unfairness and jobbing, to save whig boroughs from disfranchisement. Mr. Roebuck thinks that some of those imputations were not wholly without reason, and that the results did look exceedingly suspicious, remarking that Tavistock, the

family borough of the duke of Bedford, though constantly the subject of hostile criticism, "always, by some peculiar and happy fatality, escaped from the drag-net of the dreaded schedules." The first draft of the measure, as adopted by the committee, was explained by lord Durham, in the form of a report to the cabinet, showing how the plans thus propounded would fulfil the conditions required, and, by satisfying all reasonable desires, stop the tendency to innovation. Considering the reluctance of the king, with which lord Grey had to contend in secret, and the timidity of some members of the cabinet, the boldness of the measure was remarkable, and it took the nation rather by surprise. But this boldness was sound policy. It produced a feeling of decided satisfaction and confidence in the public mind, and disarmed all those men of ultra-views, who would have carried change to an extent fatal to the constitution. The scheme, when thus placed before the cabinet, became the subject of their anxious deliberation, and was unanimously adopted by them. It was then submitted to the king at Brighton, a few days before the meeting of parliament, was discussed with him from point to point, and eventually sanctioned. The king, however, seemed anxious to put off the introduction of the subject, if possible. He harped upon the probability of a defeat, and the mischiefs that might result, in the excited state of the public mind, from a general election, stating explicitly that he would not dissolve parliament if the plan should be rejected by the house of commons, and that he would not endeavour to coerce the house of lords, if they should feel it to be their duty to throw out the bill.

As soon as parliament assembled, earl Grey in the upper house, and lord Althorp in the commons, stated what the intentions of the government were with regard to the reform question. Earl Grey announced that they had prepared a measure which had met with the entire, the unanimous concurrence of the whole of his majesty's government. The measure was to originate in the house of commons, and lord Althorp intimated that the duty of introducing it had been intrusted to the paymaster of the forces, lord John Russell, though not then a member of the cabinet. This was done because they thought it no more than due to his long perseverance in the cause of reform in times when it was unpopular. When it was difficult to obtain a hearing upon the subject, he had brought forward plans of partial reform, and now that the cause was prosperous, they deemed it due to his perseverance and ability that he should be the person selected by the government to bring forward their plan of full and efficient reform. The measure was to be introduced on the 1st of March.

On the 11th of February lord Althorp brought forward the budget. Basing his calculations on the revenue of the previous year, he estimated the national income at £50,000,000, and the expenditure at £46,850,000, leaving an anticipated surplus of more than £3,000,000; and it was proposed to take off taxes to the whole of that amount, and to replace it to some extent by other taxes, less burdensome to the people. The principal taxes to be taken off were those on tobacco, sea-borne coal, tallow candles, glass, printed calicoes, and newspapers. The new taxes consisted in an increase of the duties on wine,

colonial timber, and raw cotton, a tax on steamboat passengers, and on the transfers of funded property. The proposed new taxes excited violent opposition, which obliged the chancellor of the exchequer to modify some of them, and abandon the last two; in fact, the financial scheme was a failure. But the government was borne up by its great measure, the reform bill.

During the interval that elapsed between the opening of parliament and the introduction of this measure, society was in a state of nervous anxiety and suspense, which became at length almost unbearable. Petitions poured into the house of commons from every part of the United Kingdom, conveying the earnest desire of the people for a real representation, which would put an end to the influence of the aristocracy in returning its members. They recommended, as the best means of effecting these objects, that the duration of parliament should be shortened, that the suffrage should be extended, and that elections should be by ballot. They expressed their conviction that a fair representation of the people would prevent manufacturing distress, commercial embarrassment, and violent fluctuations in the currency; that it would prevent unjust and unnecessary wars, and restrain the profligate expenditure of the public money on placemen and pensioners. Itinerant orators were employed by the political unions to hold meetings for the discussion of all questions of this kind, while the press put forth its gigantic power with tremendous effect, in the provinces as well as in the metropolis. "At length," says a conservative historian, "the momentous day arrived, big with the future destinies of England, and the whole civilised world." The house was thronged to excess in every part; all the avenues to it were choked with anxious and agitated crowds, panting to get the first intelligence of the eventful measure; and there were messengers mounted on fleet horses, to convey to the newspaper-offices, and through them to the country, the earliest reports of the debate. When the doors of the gallery opened, the rush was tremendous. So well had the secret been kept by the cabinet, though so deeply interesting, that not the slightest surmise had gone abroad as to the nature of the measure; and when lord John Russell rose, amidst profound silence, to state the ministerial plan, it came as much by surprise upon the whole house as upon the most distant parts of the country.*

Lord John Russell's speech was remarkable for research, accuracy, and knowledge of constitutional law. He showed that the grievances of which the people complained, in connection with the parliamentary representation, were three. First, the nomination of members by individuals; secondly, elections by close corporations; and thirdly, the enormous expenses of elections. Sixty nomination boroughs, not having a population of 2,000 each, were to be totally disfranchised; 47 boroughs, having a population of not more than 4,000, and returning two members each, would be deprived of one. The seats thus obtained were to be given to large towns and populous counties. In boroughs, the elective franchise was to be extended to householders paying £10 rent; in counties, to copyholders of £10 a-

year, and leaseholders of £50. Persons already in possession of the right of voting, were not to be deprived of it, if actually resident. Non-resident electors were to be disfranchised, and the duration of elections to be shortened by increasing the facilities for taking the poll. No compensation was to be given to the proprietors of the disfranchised boroughs, which was justified under the precedent of the forty-shilling freeholders of Ireland, who had received no compensation for the loss of their votes. The question of the duration of parliaments was reserved for future consideration.

It was a great honour to lord John Russell to have assigned to him the task of introducing so important a measure to the house of commons. It is not likely that he owed it altogether to his previous efforts in the cause of parliamentary reform. It was, to some extent, a compliment to the great house of Bedford. Though destined afterwards to occupy the first position in the government of the country, he was then looked upon as a man of moderate abilities, though he used them with industry. "He had no pretensions to the name of an orator," says Mr. Roebuck; "his utterance was hesitating, his voice thin, unmusical, and rendered utterly disagreeable by a drawling, nasal twang, which would have tended to render seriously ineffective the most pointed and eloquent language, the most profound thought, and even the most weighty argument. But in lord John Russell's speaking none of these redeeming qualities were to be found. All he said was marked by plain good sense, and regulated generally by good taste. The views he took of every subject were the views merely of his class—without originality, unadorned by learning, unaided by any force or brilliancy of style. Mediocrity is the word that best describes the character and class of his intellect; and simply not to offend, was the highest reach of his ability. The great topic was not ennobled by one ray of genius—one spark of wit—one touch of eloquence. All was decorous, uniform, frigid mediocrity—the plodding exercise of an industrious, well-intentioned, but unhappily dull scholar. The noble lord's address was unequal to the great occasion, to the remarkable assembly to which he addressed himself, and to the high position which he accidentally held. But the enthusiasm out of doors supplied every deficiency. The slow vessel, freighted with the fortunes of reform, was borne onward by the rushing tide on which it was now launched, beyond the control of the ministry or their representative. On the good sense and good feeling of the people of England its destinies now entirely depended."* The bill was read a first time without a division, after an animated discussion, which lasted seven days. During the protracted debates, nearly every man of mark in the house spoke on one side or the other. For the measure were lord Althorp, Hume, Macaulay, Sheil, lord Morpeth, Guisburne, Stanley, Wyse, Sir J. Graham, O'Connell, Lushington, lord Ebrington, Hobhouse, lord Tavistock, lord Palmerston, lord Howick, R. Grant, Harvey, J. Wood, alderman Waithman, T. Duncombe, H. L. Bulwer, C. Grant, W. Cavendish, Rice, J. Champell, C.

* Alison's "Europe," vol. iv., p. 304.

* Roebuck, vol. ii., p. 67.

Ferguson, Sir T. Denman, and Sir W. Horne. Against the bill were Sir R. Inglis, H. Twiss, lord F. Gower, Sir Charles Wetherall, viscount Mahon, Baring, lord Darlington, C. Wynn, Sir R. Peel, Col. Sibthorpe, Sir G. Clerk, Tyrrell, North, W. Y. Peel, Bethel Praed, M. Attwood, Sir J. York, Goulburn, Courtenay, Croker, G. Banks, K. Douglas, Lefroy, Sir G. Warrender, Cartwright, Sir R. Vivian, V. Stuart, Sir E. Sugden, lord Valetort, Sir J. Shelley, Shaw, Sir J. Searlett, Sir T. Acland, General Gascoyne, M. T. Sadler, lord Starmont, Sir R. Wilson, and G. Price.

The preponderance of argument and eloquence was greatly on the side of the people. Among the many able speeches delivered on the occasion, the most masterly was by Mr. Macaulay—the most distinguished for its knowledge of history, its philosophic spirit, the force of its reasoning, and the beauty of its language.

“We talk,” said he, “of the wisdom of our ancestors; and in one respect, certainly, they were wiser than we are. They legislated for their own times; they looked at England as it was before them; they did not think it necessary to give twice as many members to York as they did to London, because York had been the capital of England in the time of Constantine; and they would certainly have been amazed if they had been told that a city with a hundred thousand inhabitants would be left without representation in the nineteenth century, merely because in the thirteenth it consisted only of a few huts. They formed a representative system, not indeed without defects and irregularities, but which was well adapted to the England of their time. But when new forms of property arose, when former towns became villages, and former villages became towns, a change in the representation became necessary, to prevent it from becoming the mere vehicle of class government, and thereby proving a curse, instead of a blessing, to society. Unfortunately, when times were changed, the old institutions remained unchanged. The form remained when the spirit had departed. Then came the pressure almost to bursting—the new wine in the old bottles—the new people under the old institutions. It is now time for us to pay a decent, rational, manly reverence to our ancestors, not by superstitiously adhering to what, under other circumstances, they did, but by doing what they, under our circumstances, would have done. All history is full of revolutions, produced by causes similar to those which are now operating in England. A portion of the community which had been of no account expands and becomes strong. It demands a place in the system, suited not to its former weakness, but to its present strength. If this is granted, all is well; if it is refused, then comes the struggle between the young energy of the one class and the ancient privileges of the other. Such was the struggle between the patricians and plebeians of Rome; such was the struggle between the Italian allies for admission to the full rights of Roman citizens; such was the struggle of the North American colonies against the mother country; such was the struggle of the *tiers état* of France against the aristocracy of birth; such was the struggle which the catholics of Ireland maintained against the aristocracy of creed; such is the struggle which the free people of colour

in Jamaica are now maintaining against the aristocracy of skin; such, finally, is the struggle which the middle classes of England are maintaining against the aristocracy of mere locality—against an aristocracy the principle of which is to invest a hundred drunken potwallopers in one place, the owner of a ruined hovel in another, with power which we withhold from cities renowned to the farthest end of the earth for the marvels of their wealth and the prodigies of their industry.

“The argument drawn from the virtual representation is wholly unfounded. On what principle can it be maintained that a power which is admitted to be salutary when exercised virtually, is noxious when exercised directly? If the wishes of Manchester have already as much influence with us as if Manchester were directly represented, can there be any danger in giving direct members to Manchester? The utmost that can be said for virtual representation is, that it is as good as direct representation. If so, why not grant direct representation? If it be said there is an evil in change, is there not a still greater evil in discontent? Can it be said that a system works well which has become the parent of boundless discontent—which has almost alienated the hearts of the people from the institutions of their country? It is almost as essential to the utility of a house of commons, that it should possess the confidence of the people, as that it should deserve that confidence. But it is here that the crazy part of the constitution is to be found; what should be the most popular part of the constitution has become the most unpopular. None but a few insane radicals wish to dethrone the king, or turn out the house of lords; but the whole people desire to alter the constitution of the house of commons.”

Another accomplished master of rhetoric, and sound political philosopher, Francis, afterwards lord Jeffrey, followed up the same irresistible line of argument. He showed that the fall of all the free states that ever existed on earth had been owing to the obstinate resistance of the privileged classes to an extension of the privilege of voting to other classes of citizens. “It was thus with Athens and Sparta, and the Italian republics, in which thousands disposed of the interests, the fortunes, and the lives of millions. We lost our American colonies because we insisted on taxing them without their consent. Coercive operations, pushed to the utmost extent of cruelty, had been tried in vain. The press had been fettered, the Habeas Corpus Act had been suspended, public meetings had been prohibited, the whole stock of palliatives had been exhausted, and the evils remained more formidable than ever. Under these circumstances, the government had brought forward the great measure of conciliation, intended to still all animosities, to reconcile all interests, and to satisfy all reasonable expectations. It took away inordinate power from the few, that it might be distributed on principles of equity among the mass of the middle orders—the citizens of towns and the yeomanry of the country. The end of all government is the happiness of the people, and that happiness can never be promoted by a form of government in which the middle classes have no confidence. Give them their rightful position in the constitution, and they will become its main support, and its firmest defenders. Nor let it be appre-

bended that the effect of this plan would be to destroy the power and privileges of the aristocracy, and exclude talent from the legislature. Large and populous boroughs would spontaneously choose men of ability and public spirit. No reform can prevent wealth, learning, and eloquence from having their proper influence where constituencies are free. An aristocracy dwelling among the people, and performing the duties of property in their neighbourhood, cannot fail to exert legitimately great influence on elections. But if there be a portion of the aristocracy who do not live among the people, and care nothing for them—who seek honours without merit, places without duty, and pension without service—the sooner it is swept away, with the corruption it has engendered, the better for the country in which it has repressed so long every wholesome and invigorating influence."

Scotland, before the reform bill, was ruled by an oligarchy. The population was two millions and a half, the constituency was only 2,500. The power was to be taken from that small junto, and extended to the great middle class of that intelligent and loyal people. In Ireland, a host of rotten boroughs, some without any constituency at all, was to be swept away. The general result would be an increase for the United Kingdom of half a million electors, making the whole number enjoying the franchise 900,000. Of these 50,000 would be found in the new towns, created into parliamentary boroughs in England, 110,000 additional electors in boroughs already returning members. For instance, London would have 95,000; the English counties, 100,000; Scotland, 60,000; Ireland, 40,000. The house would consist in all of 596 members, being a reduction of sixty-two on the existing number of 658. The number of seats abolished was 168, which reduced the house to 490. Five additional members were given to Scotland, three to Ireland, one to Wales, eight to London, thirty-four to large English towns, and fifty-five to English counties.

"No words," says Sir Archibald Alison, "can convey an adequate idea of the astonishment which the announcement of this project of reform created in the house of commons and the country. Nothing approaching to it had ever been witnessed before, or has been since. Men's minds were prepared for a change, perhaps a very considerable one, especially in the enfranchising new cities and towns which were unrepresented; but it never entered into the imagination of any human being out of the cabinet that so sweeping and entire a change would be proposed, especially by the king's ministers. The Tories had never dreaded such a revolution; the radicals had never hoped for it. Astonishment was the universal feeling. Many laughed outright; none thought the bill could pass. It was supposed by many that ministers neither intended nor desired it, but wished only to establish a thorn in the side of their adversaries, which should prevent them from holding power if they succeeded in displacing them. So universal was this feeling, that it is now generally admitted that had Sir Robert Peel, instead of permitting the debate to go on, instantly divided the house, on the plea that the proposed measure was too revolutionary to be for a moment entertained, leave to bring in the bill would have

been refused by a large majority. The cabinet ministers themselves are known to have thought at the time that their official existence then hung upon a thread."*

Mr. Roebuck often heard lord Brougham relate an anecdote which seems to confirm the opinion here expressed by Sir Archibald Alison. But Mr. Roebuck relates it as a vivid illustration of the ignorance of ministers, even at the eleventh hour, as to the feelings of the people. The story is, that the members of the cabinet who were not in the house of commons dined that day with the lord chancellor, whose secretary, Mr. (afterwards Sir Denis) Le Marchant, sat under the gallery of the house of commons, and sent half-hour bulletins to the noble and learned lord on the progress of the debate. They ran thus:—"Lord John has been up ten minutes—house very full—great anxiety and interest shown—extraordinary sensation produced by the plan on both sides of the house. Lord John is near the end of his speech. My next will tell you who follows him." 'Now,' said lord Brougham, 'we have often talked over and guessed at the probable course of the opposition; and I always said, were I in Peel's place, I would not condescend to argue the point, but would, so soon as lord John Russell sat down, get up and declare that I would not debate so revolutionary, so mad a proposal, and would insist upon dividing the house at once. "If he does this," I used to say, "we are dead beat; but if he allows himself to be drawn into a discussion, we shall succeed." When Le Marchant's bulletin at length came, which was to tell us the course adopted by the opposition, I held the note unopened in my hand, and laughing, said, "Now this decides our fate; therefore let us take a glass of wine all round, in order that we may with proper nerve read the fatal missive." Having done so, I opened the note, and seeing the first line, which was, "Peel has been up twenty minutes," I flourished the note round my head, "Hurra! hurra! victory! victory! Peel has been speaking twenty minutes!" And so we took another glass of wine to congratulate ourselves on our good fortune.'"

It may be owing to a lapse of memory on the part of lord Brougham that he represented Sir Robert Peel as replying to lord John Russell. The motion of the noble lord was seconded by Sir John Sebright, and the first opposition speaker was Sir Robert Inglis. Mr. Roebuck marvels how little ministers knew of the intensity of the public feeling, when they believed that Sir Robert Peel *could* have so disposed of the measure, remarking that "so daring and insolent a disregard of popular opinion would have risked everything which Sir Robert Peel and every wise man held dear."

Sir Robert Inglis argued vehemently against the measure. He denounced the government for having proclaimed that the house of commons had lost the confidence of the country, and was incompetent to perform its proper functions. It was the first time for fifty years that any minister of the crown had dared to do so, and to pledge their sovereign before the country to such a falsehood. The popular demand for parliamentary reform, he contended, had arisen entirely from the example of successful

* Alison, vol. iv., p. 315.

† Roebuck, vol. ii., pp. 87, 88.

revolutions in France and Belgium, and would subside gradually when those convulsions had terminated. He might apply to the state of things the words of Burke in 1770: "Faction will make its cries resound through the nation as if the whole were in an uproar, when by far the majority, and much the better part, will seem for a time annihilated by the quiet in which their virtue and moderation incline them to enjoy the blessings of government." They called their plan a restoration, but it was nothing of

called into parliamentary existence because it was large and populous, or excluded because it was small and decayed. Old Sarum, of which so much had been heard, had never been larger than when it was disfranchised. As to Manchester, and other large manufacturing towns, they had prospered without any representatives, and had never wanted advocates in the house to maintain their rights. The house of commons was, in fact, the most complete representation of the interests of the people that ever was



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the kind. It was never a principle of the English constitution that representation should be founded upon population and taxation. Our sovereigns in early times called parliaments together because they wanted men and money, and the appeal was made to *liberi hominis*. The next step was calling on communities to assist at these parliaments, but then each community had only one vote. He defied any one to point out a single instance, in the whole history of England, in which a town or borough was

assembled in any age or country. It was the absence of symmetry in the elective franchise which admitted to the house interests so various. The *concordia discors* opens the door to the admission of all talent, and of all classes, and of all interests. The men who have entered parliament by means of the close or rotten boroughs, as they are called, have been its greatest ornament, and more than any other contributed to the advancement and prosperity of the kingdom. There has not been an eminent man in

the house of commons for the last hundred years who did not begin his career as member for a close borough. Lord Chatham entered parliament as member for Old Sarum; Mr. Pitt represented Appleby; Mr. Fox, rejected by a large constituency, took refuge in a close borough. Mr. Burke and Mr. Canning sat originally for Wendover, and it was only in their glory they were transferred—the former to Bristol, and the latter to Liverpool. Romilly and Brougham owed their elevation to the same system, but for the existence of which in their early days they would have been unknown to fame. How could they otherwise get into parliament? Will men of independence or genius condescend to the arts requisite to gain large constituencies? It was alleged that the unreformed parliament was filled with placemen, but the opponents of reform asserted that there was never an age when it contained a smaller number. In the first parliament of George I., the number was 271; in the first of George II., it was 257; but in the first of George IV., it was 109. They argued, following Mr. Canning, that if reform were granted the constitution would be destroyed. It was possible that titles of honour might still be continued; it was possible that the house of lords might retain a nominal existence; but its real conservative power, its distinct legislative character, would be gone. Popularise the house of commons, and the reformers would have everything their own way. They knew that the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of the nobility would be but as the dust in the balance against a preponderating democracy. They would be liable to be swept away by an angry vote of the house of commons. The crown and the peerage would be to the constitution, which they assail, but as the baggage to the army.

Such was the course of argument on the side of the conservatives. After a debate of seven nights, the bill was read a first time, without a division; the second reading had been set down for the 21st of March. In the meantime the nation began to form itself rapidly into two parties—reformers and anti-reformers. The tories were all re-united, driven together by the sense of a common danger; divisions occasioned by the currency and agricultural distress were all forgotten—all merged in one mighty current of conservative feeling. The whole strength of that party rallied under the leadership of Sir Robert Peel. His bitterest opponents, such as Lord Winchelsea and Sir Edward Knatchbull, were among the most ardent and cordial of his allies. On the other hand, the reformers were in transports of joy and exultation. "I honestly confess," said Mr. John Smith, "that when I first heard the ministerial proposal it had the effect of taking away my breath, so surprised and delighted was I to find the ministers so much in earnest." This was the almost universal feeling among reformers, who comprised the mass of the middle and working classes. No bill in our parliamentary history was ever honoured like this. It was accepted by universal suffrage as the charter of reform. Every clause, every sentence, every word in it was held sacred; and the watchword at every meeting, the cry of the *vox populi* everywhere was, "The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill." Petitions were got

up in every town, and almost every parish, some of them bearing twenty thousand or thirty thousand signatures, demanding the passing of the bill untouched and unimpaired. The more determined the resistance of the conservative party, the more violent the reformers became. One natural result of the public excitement was a fanatical intolerance amongst the most ignorant of the people. The conservatives complained of this temper of the multitude; they said that if the best men in the community expressed convictions opposed to the prevalent opinions, they were dealt with as being profligate oppressors, who wished to trample on and plunder the people—creatures, therefore, to be hunted down as beasts of prey if they did not fly before the face of their pursuers. No matter how independent their position, or excellent their character, they were denounced as betrayers of the rights of the people, as robbers of the poor, as crawling slaves of the noble and the wealthy. To dissent from the bill was to exhibit a corruption of heart, an incapacity of understanding, which unfitted the wretch who was guilty of this baseness for any place within the pale of the constitution.

The violence and exaggeration, however, were fairly balanced on each side; and when we compare the petitions in favour of the bill emanating from the working classes with those of the wealthiest members of the community, we shall find that the men who were treated with scorn, and called a rabble and a mob, were not inferior to their revilers in wisdom and moderation, in justness of thought, or dignity of language. We have a striking example of this in the case of the Glasgow operatives, who had been distinguished as radical reformers, and who yet addressed the house of commons in the following terms, at a time when the excitement was at its height:—

"Your petitioners hail, with heartfelt satisfaction, the plan of reform now brought forward by his majesty's ministers, as an earnest of the sincerity and firm determination on the part of the legislature to meet the rising wishes of the country.

"Your petitioners, though not included in the present mode of elective franchise, and although they are conscious of their capability to exercise this indisputable right, yet, taking into view the corrupt and distracted state of parties, whose exclusive monopolies are about to be wrested from their grasp, the difficulties which ministers have to encounter in meeting so many conflicting interests, and sacrificing their own prejudice and pride of rank on the altar of public opinion, humbly conceive that the present measure is best calculated to allay party turbulence, recall the country from the brink of inevitable revolution, and place the representation on a principle which carries with it a progressive improvement which must ultimately relieve the country from many grievous embarrassments, and secure to the labourer an ample and just share in the productions of his own hands, and protect him in future from all vicious and galling restrictions.

"Your petitioners deprecate the most distant idea of a revolution; and although by such an event they have little to lose, yet they dread the horrors that might be perpetrated, and thus refrain from insisting on their right to

vote. They envy neither title nor wealth, but they wish to be placed in such a condition that they may enjoy in peace the reward of their own labour, and be enabled to raise themselves, on their own resources, to comfort and comparative independence; and in thus abandoning their claims for the present, your petitioners fervently hope that the high parties who have so bitterly opposed the ministerial plan of reform, and who ought to have taken the lead in concession, will now be induced to relinquish a part of their unjust claims; but should they still persevere in their wicked purposes, and should it be found necessary, your petitioners will willingly arm themselves to a man in defence of the throne and his majesty's patriotic councillors."

These Glasgow operatives, thus cheerfully submitting to the privation of the franchise, though feeling conscious and proving that they were capable of using it with advantage to the country—praying that a great and useful reform, which excluded them, might be carried, and offering to arm when called upon in defence of the crown and government—presented a noble spectacle.

A petition of a very different nature was presented by the bankers and merchants of London against the bill. "While," said they, "we should have been far from opposing the adoption of any proposition temperate in its character, gradual in its operation, consistent with justice and the ancient usages of the realm, and having for its object the correction of acknowledged abuses, or any amelioration in the administration of public affairs, we feel it impossible to regard in that light a measure which, by its unprecedented and unnecessary infringement on the rights and privileges of large and wealthy bodies of people, would go far to shake the foundation of that constitution under which our sovereign holds his title to the throne, his nobles to their estates, and ourselves and the rest of our fellow-subjects to the various possessions and indemnities which we enjoy by law; a measure which, while it professes to enlarge the representation of the kingdom on the broad basis of property, would, in its practical operation, have the effect of closing the principal avenues through which the moneyed, the commercial, the shipping, and colonial interests, together with all those connected and independent interests throughout our vast empire abroad, have hitherto been represented in the legislature, and would thus effectually exclude the possessors of a large portion of the national wealth from any effectual voice and influence in the national affairs."

It is pleasant now, after an experience of thirty years, to see how delusive all those doleful vaticinations have proved. We hear no complaints now that the wealthy classes and the great moneyed interests of the country are deprived of their legitimate influence in our parliamentary representation. The Rothschilds, the Barings, the Joneses, and the Crawfords have not been excluded from the house of commons. Sir Robert Inglis firmly believed that such a representative system as the reform bill established was never yet found to exist with a free press on one hand and a monarchy on another. On the very day when the commonwealth murdered their king, they voted the house of lords useless. The same thing, he predicted, would

follow reform, as naturally as cause followed effect. Just in proportion as they increased the influence of the popular will, they risked the existence of the sovereign and the peers. The catastrophe might not happen in a day or two, but he was perfectly sure that if the measure were carried, "it would sweep away the house of lords clean in the course of ten years."* The popular will was let into the representation; it has even been extended since that time; thrice ten years have passed, and the house of lords stands as firmly as ever, upon as broad a basis, and with as lofty towers. And as to the monarchy, it is superfluous to say that it has lost none of its strength since it was deprived of the support of rotten boroughs, and that it has suffered nothing from the prevalence of the popular will in the legislation of the country.

On the 21st of March lord John Russell moved the second reading of the English reform bill. Sir Richard Vivian moved, as an amendment, that it be read a second time that day six months. There was nothing new in the debate that followed, though it lasted two nights. On the 22nd the division occurred. The second reading was carried by a majority of one. This was hailed with exultation by the conservatives, as equivalent to a defeat. But there were prophets who saw something ominous in this majority of one. They remembered that the first triumph of the *tiers état* in the national assembly, in 1789, when they constituted themselves a separate chamber, was carried by one. The house was the fullest on record up to that time, the numbers being 302 to 301, the speaker and the four tellers not included. A remarkable circumstance connected with the division was, that about two to one of the county members in England and Ireland were in favour of the bill. No less than sixty votes on the same side were for places to be disfranchised or reduced. Although in the house it was felt that the division was equivalent to a defeat, the reformers out of doors were not in the least disheartened; on the contrary, they became, if possible, more determined. The political unions redoubled their exertions, and the country assumed an attitude of defiance to the oligarchical classes which excited serious alarm, from which the king himself was not exempt. The pressure from without accumulated in force till it became something terrific, and it was evident to all reflecting men that the only alternative was reform or revolution.

On the 18th of April lord John Russell moved that the house should go into committee on the bill, stating that he proposed to make certain alterations in the details of the measure, but none affecting its principles. General Gascoyne then moved that it should be an instruction to the committee that the number of members composing the house of commons ought not to be reduced. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sadler, and resisted by lord Althorp, who declared that the object of the motion was to destroy the bill. It was nevertheless carried, after an animated debate, by a majority of eight against the government. Ministers had been placed in a position of peculiar difficulty—they had to humour the king's

* "Mirror of Parliament," 1831, p. 563.

vanity and love of popular applause, in order to prevent his becoming sulky, and refusing to consent to a dissolution, which they felt to be inevitable. They had also to proceed with great caution in dealing with the opposition, lest, irritated by the threat of dissolution, they should resolve to stop the supplies, it being impossible to dissolve parliament in the present state of the estimates. They were fortunate enough, however, to guard against this danger. On the 23rd of March supply was moved, and a large portion of the army estimates voted. On the 25th Sir James Graham moved portions of the navy estimates, and on the same night the civil list was provided for. On the 28th of March further supplies of various kinds were granted, and on the 30th the house was adjourned for the Easter holidays, till the 12th of April. The affairs of Ireland were then intrusted in the house of commons to the vigorous hands of Mr. Stanley (now the earl of Derby), who had been sent over as chief secretary with lord Anglesea, and whom, from his firmness in administering the law, Mr. O'Connell denounced as "scorpion Stanley." On the 24th of March Mr. Stanley moved the first reading of the bill to amend the representation of Ireland. A long and a violent debate ensued, in which Ireland was not so much thought of as the vast general interests involved in the impending revolution.

The lords, naturally, felt the most intense interest in the discussions that were proceeding in the commons, and longed for an opportunity to fling themselves into the great constitutional battle. At length, on the 28th of March, lord Wharnccliffe made one, by moving for certain papers relative to the measure in the commons. In the course of an able speech, he made some important admissions. With regard to the feeling out of doors, he said: "Indeed, that feeling is more than strong—it is irresistible. It is impossible for any man who is not absolutely blind not to see that an administration which should be appointed upon the principle of withstanding all reform could no longer maintain its ground, and would be left, night after night, in constant minorities." He was for a reasonable amount of reform, which, in fact, could not be resisted; but he deprecated a dissolution under existing circumstances, which would bring together a "convention parliament—a mere house of delegates, for there would be no room for deliberation." When the bill came before the house of lords, backed by the results of a general election, he asked, would their lordships be able to refuse to assent to it? and said the house would be placed unfairly in a painful predicament. And he observed, if he could make his voice heard by the monarch on his throne, he would say, "If parliament should now be dissolved by his majesty's proclamation, it would place the house of lords in a most perilous situation." Lord Wharnccliffe was answered by lord Durham, lord Plunket, and lord Brougham, and the result was a ministerial triumph, which added fresh fuel to the public excitement during the recess.

In the meantime the ministers had done what they could to make the king comfortable with regard to his revenue. They proposed £510,000 a-year for the civil list, instead of £498,480, as recommended by the committee, while the liberal jointure of £100,000 a-year was

settled upon queen Adelaide. This gratified his majesty in the highest degree, and reconciled him to the dissolution. There was a story current at the time, that when the royal carriages were not ready to take him to the house of lords, the king said, "Then call a hackney coach." This story is now known to be an invention; and Mr. Roebuck—whose intimacy with lord Brougham, and his other opportunities of becoming acquainted with the real facts, render his authority unquestionable—gives the following account of the matter. It is certainly one of extraordinary interest. "On the morning of the 22nd, lord Grey and the lord chancellor waited on the king, in order to request him instantly to dissolve parliament. The necessity of a dissolution had long been foreseen and decided on by ministers; but the king had not yet been persuaded to consent to so bold a measure; and now the two chiefs of the administration were about to intrude themselves into the royal closet, not to advise and request a dissolution, but to request the king on a sudden, on that very day, and within a few hours, to go down and put an end to his parliament, in the midst of the session, and with all its ordinary business unfinished. The bolder mind of the chancellor took the lead, and lord Grey anxiously solicited him to *manage* the king on the occasion. So soon as they were admitted, the chancellor, with some care and circumlocution, propounded to the king the object they had in view. The startled monarch no sooner understood the drift of the chancellor's somewhat periphrastic statement, than he exclaimed, in wonder and anger against the very idea of such a proceeding, 'How is it possible, my lords, that I can, after this fashion, repay the kindness of parliament to the queen and myself? They have just granted me a most liberal civil list, and the queen a splendid annuity in case she survive me.' The chancellor confessed that they had, as regarded his majesty, been a liberal and wise parliament, but that, nevertheless, their further existence was incompatible with the peace and safety of the kingdom; and both he and lord Grey insisted upon the absolute necessity of their request, and that this request was in pursuance of a unanimous decision of the cabinet, and they felt themselves unable to conduct the affairs of the country in the present condition of parliament. 'But, my lords,' said the king, 'nothing is prepared; the great officers of state are not summoned.' 'Pardon me, sire,' said the chancellor, bowing with profound *apparent* humility; 'we have taken the great liberty of giving them to understand that your majesty commanded their attendance at the proper hour.' 'But, my lords, the crown, the robes, and other things needed, are not prepared.' 'I entreat your majesty's pardon for my boldness; they are all prepared and ready, the proper officers being desired to attend in proper form and time.' 'But, my lords, you know the thing is wholly impossible; the guards, the troops have had no orders, and cannot be ready in time.' 'Pardon me, sire; we know how bold the step is, but presuming on your majesty's great goodness, and your anxious desire for the safety of your kingdom and the happiness of your people, *I have given the order, and the troops are ready.*' The king started in serious anger, flamed red in the face, and burst forth with, 'What, my

lords! Have you dared to act thus? Such a thing was never heard of. You, my lord chancellor, ought to know that such an act is treason—high treason, my lord.' 'Yes, sire,' said the chancellor, 'I do know it, and nothing but my thorough knowledge of your majesty's great goodness, of your paternal anxiety for the good of your people, and my own solemn belief that the good of the state depends upon this day's proceedings, could have emboldened me to the performance of so unusual, and, in ordinary circumstances, improper proceeding. I am ready, in my own person, to bear all the blame and receive all the punishment which your majesty may deem meet; but I again entreat your majesty to listen to us, and follow our counsel.' After some further expostulations by both the ministers, the king cooled down, and consented. The speech to be delivered by him on the occasion was ready prepared, and in the chancellor's pocket. He agreed to it, and dismissed his ministers for the moment, with something between a menace and a joke on the audacity of their proceedings."

An extraordinary scene of confusion was being enacted in the house of commons at the moment when the king's reluctance was overcome. Sir R. Vivian took occasion to arraign ministers violently for their intention of dissolving parliament. Sir Francis Burdett contended that he was out of order. The speaker ruled that he was in order. The reformers differed with the chair. Loud cries of "Sir Robert Peel! Sir Robert Peel!" were answered by counter cries of "Sir Francis Burdett! Sir Francis Burdett!" and some wiser cries of "Chair! chair!" The speaker rose and stilled this unprecedented storm—rebuked those who had disputed his authority, and again called on Sir R. Peel, who proceeded thereupon, in undisguised anger, to address the house. But as the noise of the cannon, which announced the king's approach, boomed into the house, the reform members loudly cheered, each discharge being greeted with overbearing and triumphant shouts. Suddenly Sir Robert's angry speech, and the loud cheers of the reformers, were stilled by the three admonitory taps of the usher of the black rod, who came to summon the members to attend his majesty in the house of peers. The speaker at once obeyed, the commons following. A similar scene of confusion in the upper house was interrupted by the approach of the king. Lord Londonderry said, "I protest, my lords, I will not submit to—" Further than this his speech did not proceed, as the chancellor, who heard the king approaching, clutched the seals, suddenly left the woolsack, and darted out of the house. Lord Londonderry, not yet despairing, moved lord Shaftesbury again to act as speaker, and lord Mansfield began a furious harangue, in a loud and angry voice. In the meantime the lord chancellor met the king entering the house, and proceeding in procession to the robing-room. As the king advanced, the noise in the house became distinctly audible. "What's that, my lord chancellor?" said the king. "Only, may it please you, sire, the house of lords amusing themselves while awaiting your majesty's coming." The king, knowing what was meant, hastily robed, and as hastily entered the house—cutting short lord Mansfield's speech, and putting an end to all chance of

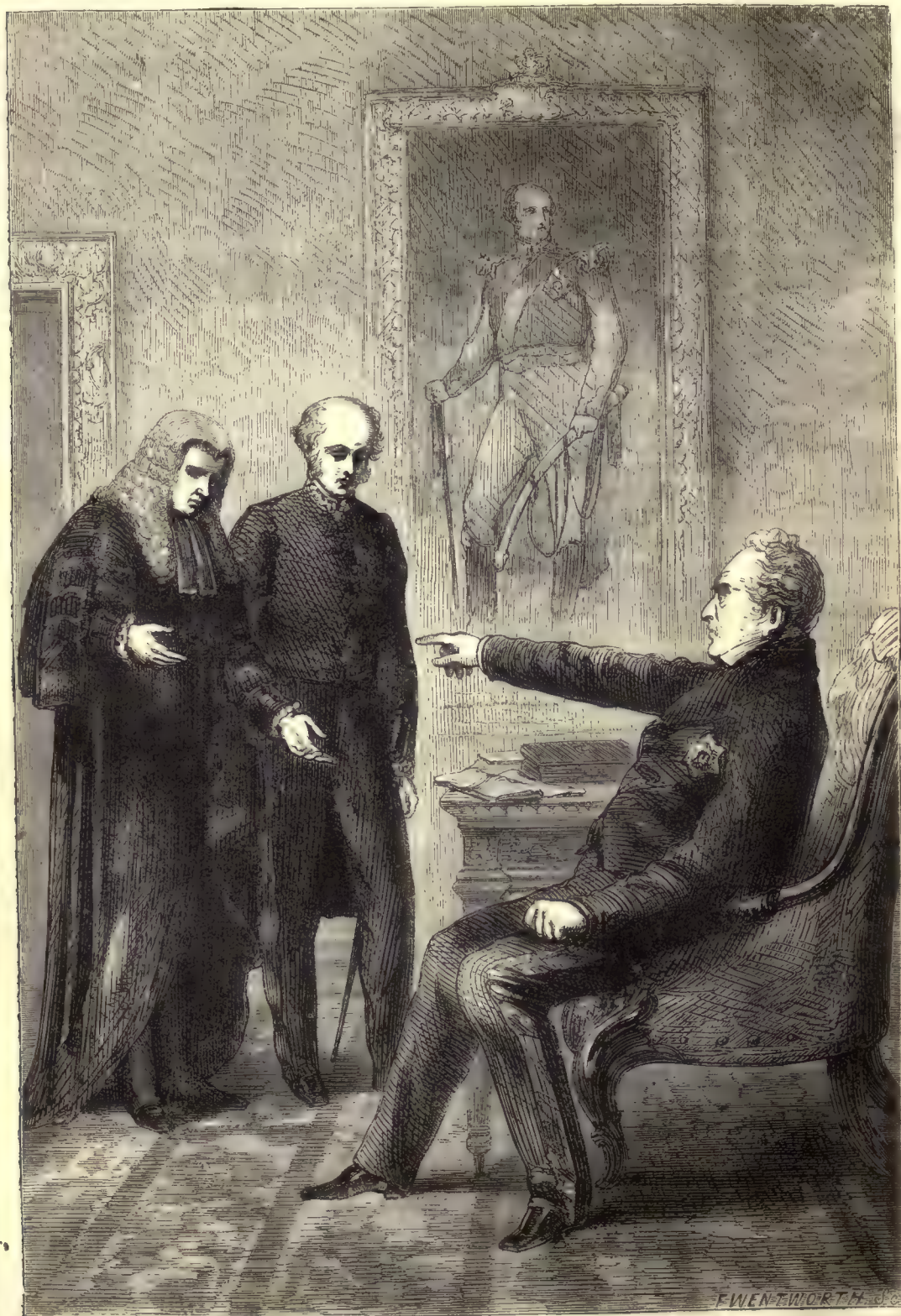
passing the resolution of lord Wharnccliffe. The king ascended the throne, and commanded the attendance of the commons. The bar of the house of lords was thronged by the mass of members who now entered. The speaker addressed the king, stating that the house of commons approached the king with profound respect; and that the commons had at no time more faithfully responded to the real feelings and interest of his majesty's affectionate people; "while it has been," he added, "their earnest desire to support the dignity and honour of the crown, upon which depend the greatness, the happiness, and the prosperity of this country." The royal assent being given to the bills that had passed, and, among others, to the civil list bill, the chancellor presented to his majesty the speech he was to deliver, and the king, with the high shrill tone he always employed, but with more than wonted energy, read the first, which, indeed, was the really important paragraph of the speech, and that which alone men cared to listen to or hear.

"My lords and gentlemen," said his majesty, "I have come to meet you for the purpose of proroguing this parliament, with a view to its instant dissolution." The voice of the king rose, and became still more shrill and piercing, as he reached the last clause of the sentence; and a loud buzz and hum, the loudest such a presence permitted, immediately followed, and nearly drowned all the succeeding sentences. The dissolution speedily followed the prorogation, and a new parliament was summoned to meet on the 14th of June.

CHAPTER XX.

The Press—The Rev. Sydney Smith on the Boroughmongering System—Fonblanque—The Times—The Peers and the Chancellor—Lord Londonderry—Parliament and the Liberty of the Press—Illuminations on the Dissolution of Parliament—Violence of the Mob—Sir Walter Scott—The Windows of Apsley House broken—Organisation of the Reformers—Reform Candidate Society—Popular Thirst for Political Knowledge—Intense Public Spirit of the Nation—Visionary Expectations—The New Parliament—The Royal Speech—Debate on the Recent Dissolution—The State of Ireland—Mr. O'Connell—Mr. Stanley—Impolitic Treatment of the Irish Poplar Chief—The Second Reform Bill—Lord John Russell's Speech—Debate on the Second Reading—Position of Sir Robert Peel—Discussions on the Reform Bill in Committee—The Chandos Clause—Proposed Representations of the Colonies—Household Suffrage—The Bill passed—Public Rejoicing—Illuminations—The Bill in the House of Lords—Debate on the Second Reading—Lord Grey's Speech: his Appeal to the Episcopal Bench: they vote against the People—Consequent Unpopularity of the Bishops—Speech of Lord Eldon: his Vaticinations—The Last Night of the Debate—Exasperation of the Public Mind—Outrages—The King stands by his Ministers—Vote of Confidence in the Commons—Prorogation of Parliament—The Royal Speech—Firmness of the Government—Bristol Riots.

THE press played a most important part in the agitation for reform. A host of the most witty, brilliant, and powerful writers of the day wielded their pens against monopoly with tremendous effect, assailing it with argument and ridicule, like a continual storm of shot and shell. Of these, the most distinguished was the Rev. Sydney Smith, who mingled argument, sarcasm, humour, and pathos, in his ardent advocacy of the popular cause, with a power and effect that made him a host in himself. In answer to the objection that the reform bill was a mere theory, he furnished the most telling illustrations from life, of the way in which the existing system kept down merit and



THE SCENE BETWEEN WILLIAM IV. AND LORDS BROUGHAM AND GREY.

damaged the public service. So far from reform being a mere theoretical improvement, he said, "I put it to every man who is himself embarked in a profession, or has sons in the same situation, if the unfair influence of boroughmongers has not perpetually thwarted him in his lawful career of ambition and professional emolument? 'I have been in three general engagements at sea,' said an old sailor; 'I have been twice wounded; I commanded the boats when the French frigate *Astrolabe* was cut out so gallantly.' 'Then, you are made a post captain?' 'No, I was very near it, but lieutenant Thomson cut me out as

parliament in shape of boroughs, and then to make laws to govern me? And how are these masses of power re-distributed? The eldest son of my lord has just come from Eton—he knows a good deal about *Æneas* and *Dido*, *Apollo* and *Daphne*—and that is all; and to this boy his father gives a six hundredth part of the power of making laws, as he would give him a horse, or a double-barrelled gun. Then *Vellum* the steward is put in—an admirable man: he has raised the estates, watched the progress of the family road and canal bills, and *Vellum* shall help to rule over the people of Israel. A neighbouring country gentle-



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I cut out the French frigate: his father is town-clerk of the borough of which lord F—— is member, and there my chance was finished.' In the same manner all over England, you will find great scholars rotting on curacies, brave captains starving in garrets, profound lawyers decayed and mouldering in the inns of court, because the parsons, warriors, and advocates of boroughmongers must be crammed to saturation, before there is a morsel of bread for the man who does not sell his votes, and put his country up to auction; and though this is of every-day occurrence, the borough system, we are told, is no practical evil. . . . But the thing I cannot and will not bear is this:—What right has this lord, or that marquis, to buy ten seats in

man, Mr. Plumkin, hunts with my lord, opens him a gate or two while the hounds are running, dines with my lord, agrees with my lord, wishes he could rival the Southdown sheep of my lord; and upon Plumkin is conferred a portion of the government. Then there is a distant relation of the same name in the county militia, with white teeth, who calls up the carriage at the Opera, and is always wishing O'Connell was hanged, drawn, and quartered. Then a barrister, who has written an article in the 'Quarterly,' and is very likely to speak and refute M'Culloch; and these five people, in whose nomination I have no more agency than I have in the nomination of the toll-keepers of the Bosphorus, are to make laws for me and my family—to put their hands in

my purse, and to sway the future destiny of this country ; and when the neighbours step in and beg permission to say a few words before these persons are chosen, there is a universal cry of ruin, confusion, and destruction. We have become a great people under Vellum and Plumkin. Under Vellum and Plumkin our ships have crossed the ocean—under Vellum and Plumkin our armies have secured the strength of the hills. To turn out Vellum and Plumkin is not reform, but revolution.”

Another witty and brilliant writer, Mr. Fonblanque, rendered important services to the cause of reform by his writings in the *Examiner*, which have been collected under the name of “Seven Administrations.” Though radical in its tendencies, he wrote, “Ministers have far exceeded our expectations. The plan of reform, though short of radical reform, tends to the utter destruction of boroughmongering, and will prepare the way for a complete improvement. The ground, limited as it is, which it is proposed to clear and open with popular influence, will suffice, as the spot desired by Archimedes for the plant of the power which must ultimately govern the whole system. Without reform, convulsion is inevitable. Upon any reform further improvement is inevitably consequent, and the settlement of the constitution on the democratic basis certain.”*

At this period the *Times* was by far the greatest power of the newspaper press, and its advocacy of the cause of reform was distinguished by a vigour and boldness which rendered it obnoxious to the house of lords, and provoked an attack on the liberty of the press, that caused a great deal of excitement during the discussions on the first reform bill. As a specimen of its style of attack, one sentence may suffice. Referring to the borough nominees in parliament, a writer on the 14th of March said:—“It is beyond question a piece of the broadest and coolest effrontery in the world, for these liveried lacqueys of public delinquents to stand up as advocates of the disgraceful service they are embarked in.” The house of lords noticed an attack by the *Times* upon themselves as libellous, and a breach of privilege. The chancellor advised them not to heed such attacks, and stated that the result of his experience in the house of commons was, that parliament never entered into such a contest with the press without repenting of it. But the very fact that he gave this prudent advice, caused them to adopt eagerly a contrary course. The bitterness of noble lords at this time broke out in small things, and was vented in unworthy insinuations against the lord chancellor, whose coming amongst them was regarded by the tory peers as an unwelcome intrusion. “On all occasions,” says Mr. Roebuck, “they drew a broad and insulting distinction between him and lord Grey, of whom they always spoke with the most guarded courtesy, even whilst blaming his ministerial acts ; but in the case of the chancellor the man and the minister were always confounded, and they sought to make him feel that, though among them, he was not of them. On the present occasion, lord Eldon and other peers, in the spirit of antagonism, gave the sanction of their authority to the declaration that the observations in

the *Times* were libellous, and a breach of privilege, and declared that they would support the motion which lord Limerick had made, that Mr. Lawson, the printer of the *Times*, be ordered to attend at the bar. Lord Haddington darkly insinuated that the lord chancellor had something to do with the authorship of the articles in the public press upon the queen’s well-known hostility to the reform bill. Lord Brougham, not noticing the insinuation, expressed his indignation that such articles had been written. Lord Londonderry, who was not a very cautious debater, praised lord Limerick for taking up the subject, censured the course proposed by the lord chancellor, and denounced the press as having become perfectly intolerable, and proceeded : ‘On former occasions a similar course has been pursued, and I say that the article now before your lordships calls upon you to adopt this course ; viz., that proposed by lord Limerick. Noble lords, in the libel before us, have been called “things ;” and I would put it to your lordships to say, whether it is pleasant for any noble lord to be called a “thing” in a public newspaper. This is not all ; for not only have your lordships been called “things,” but you are designated as “things with human pretensions.” No person can hesitate to say that the calling of a peer of this house “a thing,” and “a thing with human pretensions,” is a libel, and a breach of privilege.’”

Thus having given his opinion as to the nature of the libel, the noble marquis proceeded to point out the writer of it :—

“My lords, I say this article means every peer in this house. I say that this sentence applies to all your lordships. But is the noble lord, in any person making a speech in your lordships’ house, to be called ‘a thing with human pretensions?’ I declare, my lords, in my view of the case, it is one of the greatest outrages that ever was published. I would defy any man to read the paragraph, and not direct it to the noble earl. The noble and learned lord on the woolsack says, that if this is an outrage, it had better be taken no notice of. If it is an outrage ! I declare, my lords, when I heard the noble and learned lord on the woolsack deliver himself in this case, I thought that the noble and learned lord was a writer in the paper himself.”

On the 19th Mr. Lawson was examined, and lord Wynford then moved, “That John Joseph Lawson, having admitted himself to be the printer of a false and scandalous libel, which had appeared in the *Times* newspaper of the 16th inst., be committed to Newgate during the pleasure of the house, and that he also pay a fine of £100 as a penalty for publishing the aforesaid libel.”

This outrageous proposal at once roused up in opposition the lord chancellor, the duke of Wellington, the marquis of Lansdowne, and lord Grey. The motion was therefore amended, and Mr. Lawson was committed to the custody of the black rod, and ordered to attend on the next morning at ten. He did so, having first, through lord King, presented his petition. And thereupon ensued a debate, which, considering the state of the public mind at that time, was calculated to do irreparable mischief to the house in which it occurred. Lord Londonderry again renewed his attack on the lord chancellor, insinuating—if

* *Examiner*, March 6, 1831.

such broad statements could be called insinuations—that he was the author of the libel.

“I say, my lords, we must then proceed to discover, and adequately to punish, the individual who masks himself under the unfortunate man at the bar. I would here observe, that if there are individuals connected together for the purpose of writing such offensive paragraphs in this or any other paper, I trust they will, if they have any feelings at all, sustain bitter pangs and reproaches within their minds when, on this occasion, they see your lordships inflict a punishment on their publisher and printer, who, perhaps, has been merely obliged to comply with the orders of his employers. I confess that, in this instance, when I saw the noble and learned lord on the woolsack—who, I thought, would have been the defender of your privileges, rather than a supporter of their infringers—when I saw him, I say, last night placing himself between the house and such an offender, for the purpose of shielding the latter, I really was almost disposed to believe that the noble and learned lord was acting as counsel for the defendant in this proceeding.” This brought up the chancellor, who demanded of the noble marquis to drop vague insinuations, and come to charges. “I never use insinuations,” said the lord chancellor; “I never use insinuations, I always bring direct charges. I would rather have the noble lord’s open hostility than his covert enmity. I am sure he is incapable of persisting in insinuations—the noble lord has too much honour and high-mindedness for that; therefore, as the noble lord has hinted at something or nothing, I put myself upon my defence before your lordships; and I call on the noble marquis to charge me with something.”

Lords Wynford, Eldon, and Tenterden all declared that the house had power to find the person charged guilty of a libel, and to punish him with fine and imprisonment. The ex-chief justice Tenterden rashly gave his reasons for this opinion, and betrayed his ignorance of the law—thus giving the lord chancellor a vantage ground, which enabled him to rout the whole phalanx of law lords. Lord Tenterden said:—

“I must declare that I think the right of your lordships to the exercise of this privilege is clear, distinct, and indisputable. And why was this power conferred? It was conferred, my lords, not for the protection of those who possess it—not for the sake of the house of lords—not for the sake of the house of commons—not for the sake of the courts of law, all of whom are in equal possession of the power; but for the sake of the nation at large. . . . These, my lords, are the reasons why the two houses of parliament, and why courts of law, possess this power; these are the reasons why each of them ought to possess it; and I am quite sure that if they, and especially the two houses of parliament, did not possess this power of vindicating themselves, it would be impossible that their respective duties could be performed with dignity to themselves or with advantage to the country.”*

“Marmont’s false move at Salamanca,” says Mr. Roebuck, “was not a more flagrant mistake than this

declaration on the part of lord Tenterden; the duke of Wellington’s swoop down from the Arapiles was not more crushing and decisive than the triumphant and vehement reply of the lord chancellor.

“The lord chancellor’s original position, was that the possession of the power to fine and imprison for breach of privilege by the house of lords was, in his opinion, very doubtful; that of the impolicy of exercising such power he had no doubt at all; and all this he set forth clearly, forcibly, and in a manner most calculated to produce an extraordinary effect upon the mind of the public out of doors. The chief justice at this moment introduced himself into the debate to diminish this effect, and to shield his friend, lord Wynford, who had first proposed this reckless, unjust, and most impolitic proceeding. He (the chief justice) asserted, in the terms above stated, that both houses of parliament had this same power, and without it they could not legislate for the country. Now, it is notorious to every tyro in the laws of parliament that the house of commons has not the power. Whatever doubt any one may feel as regards the lords, there is none in the mind of any one who is competent to give an opinion as to the power of the house of commons—that house cannot fine, and cannot imprison for a time certain. The lord chief justice utterly destroyed the authority and worth of his opinion, by thus basing it upon a statement utterly erroneous in point of law, and clearly disproved as matter of fact by the experience of every day. But the world out of doors were deeply moved by the whole proceeding. They trembled to think what might be their fate if again a corrupt, irresponsible, and arbitrary house of commons should be leagued with the lords against the people, to whom the refuge of the courts of law would no longer exist. The scene of that night incited the many-headed press to still farther exertions, by clearly showing that its destruction would assuredly be the consequence of defeat upon this now vital question of reform. Mr. Lawson was on the next day reprimanded and released.”*

Such was the state of public feeling that preceded the dissolution of parliament. That event was the signal for the wildest exultation and triumph among the people. There was a general illumination in London, sanctioned by the lord mayor. In Edinburgh, and other cities where the civic authorities did not order it, the reform clubs took upon themselves to guide the people in their public rejoicings. In many places the populace broke the windows of those who refused to illuminate; and in some cases those who did comply had their windows smashed, if suspected of tory principles. In Scotland the mobs are said to have been peculiarly violent. Sir Archibald Alison states that the windows of his brother, professor Alison, whose life had been devoted to the relief of the poor, though illuminated, “were utterly smashed in five minutes, as were those of above a thousand others of the most respectable citizens.” The lord provost of Edinburgh was seized by the mob on the day of the election, who tried to throw him over the North Bridge, a height of ninety feet—a crime for which the ringleaders were afterwards con-

* “Mirror of Parliament,” 1831, vol. ii., pp. 157—9.

* Roebuck, vol. ii., p. 145.

victed and punished by the judiciary court. The military were called out, but withdrawn at the request of the lord advocate Jeffrey. At Ayr, he says, "the conservative voters had to take refuge in the town hall, from which they were escorted by a body of brave whigs, who, much to their honour, had them conveyed to a steam-boat." "No person anywhere in Scotland could give his vote for the conservative candidate." At Lanark a dreadful riot occurred, and the conservative candidate was seriously wounded in the church where the election was going forward. At Dumbarton the tory candidate, lord William Graham, only escaped death by being concealed in a garret, where he lay hid the whole day. At Jedburgh a band of ruffians hooted the dying Sir Walter Scott. "I care for you no more," said he, "than for the hissing of geese." Sir Walter, in his diary, says:—"The mob were exceedingly vociferous and brutal, as they usually are now-a-days. The population gathered in formidable numbers—a thousand from Hawick—sad blackguards. I left the burgh in the midst of abuse and the gentle hints of 'burke Sir Walter!'" In London the windows in the houses of the leading anti-reformers were all broken. The duke of Wellington was not spared in this raid against the opponents of popular rights. The windows of Apsley House were smashed with volleys of stones. It happened, unfortunately, that the duchess lay dead within at the time. She had expired just as the booming of the guns in St. James's Park announced the approach of the king to dissolve parliament. The crowd knew nothing of this. The duke, however, was determined that he would not suffer an outrage like this another time. He had iron shutters put up, so as to guard every window which was liable to be assailed, either from Piccadilly or Hyde Park; "and to the day of his death they remained," says Mr. Gleig, "a monument, so to speak, of the intemperance of a misguided people, and of the apathy or complicity of the government, who took no steps to restrain it."* Mr. Gleig might have spared this imputation on the government.

The organisation of the reformers, in preparation for the elections, was more general and perfect than anything of the kind recorded in the history of England. That in such a vast, deep-reaching, and mighty movement, stirring society to its lowest depths, and heaving to the surface some of its foulest elements, there should have been violence and outrage, was a result to be expected; and it is questionable whether, in the temper of the times, a parade of military power to repress the ebullitions of popular feeling might not have led to disastrous consequences. The manifestation of public spirit and self-sacrifice on the part of the reformers was very extraordinary. It was an uprising of the whole population, guided for the most part by its highest intelligence and worth, in order to wrest its rights and privileges from a grasping and defiant oligarchy, whose selfish interests stood in the way of just government, political equity, and social progress. In London large sums were subscribed, and placed in the hands of men of trustworthy character, in order that the

popular candidates might be effectually assisted where money was wanted. In every place which had the right of returning members was established a reform committee, which was indefatigable in its exertions. A society was established, called "The Parliamentary Candidate Society," not for the purpose of supplying candidates, but of furnishing information about those that offered, telling the world all about their speeches, their votes, and their public conduct, if they had been previously members; if they were new candidates, unknown to the public, their characters and connections were all accurately described for the benefit of the constituencies which they addressed. This society was denounced by the tories as a fearful omen of revolution, and a monstrous outrage on the constitution. The whig borough proprietors and landlords stood by the reform party firmly, and used all their influence in supporting ministerial candidates. The "Quarterly Review," and the tory press generally, proclaimed abroad that the nation was in the throes of a revolution, and that the end of the world was coming. There was nothing in England like it since the great rebellion, and it was well if the country was not about to pass through horrors similar to those of the French revolution. One of the most remarkable signs of those times was the popular thirst for knowledge that inspired the masses. In remote hamlets, in solitary farmhouses, in humble cottages, hard-working men were found clubbing their earnings to purchase a newspaper, in order that they might learn what was going on in the country. They walked miles in the evenings and on Sundays, in order to meet in little clubs, where one of their number read the parliamentary debates, or the speeches of candidates, by the light of a solitary candle. They knew all about the champions of reform, their antecedents, their characters, their difficulties, and their achievements. The maxim that "Union is strength," was exemplified to a marvellous extent on this occasion. Noblemen, landed gentry, merchants, capitalists, manufacturers joined the political unions, and were astonished to meet there amongst the operatives, electors and non-electors, men of superior intelligence, clear judgment, and sound sense. When face to face in their meetings with their neighbours of lower degree, men of the upper classes learned much. "They were startled," says Miss Martineau, "by sudden apparitions of men of mind superior to their own—men of genius and heroism, rising up from the most depressed ranks of non-electors; and they in their turn were found to be imbued with that respect for men as men, which is the result of superior education, but which the poor and depressed too often conceive not to exist among the idle independent, whom they are apt to call the proud. Such was the preparation going forward throughout the country while the ministers were at work in London—the rapid social education of all ranks, which may be regarded as another of the ever-springing blessings of the peace, and by which the great transition from the old to the new parliamentary system was rendered safe."*

It was a natural effect of this extraordinary excitement

* "Life of Wellington," p. 483.

* "The Thirty Years' Peace," vol. ii., p. 40.

that visionary expectations should prevail with regard to the blessings of parliamentary reform. The rhetorical exaggerations of excited orators were taken by the multitude as literally true. The nation was to be enriched by a fair representation of the people in parliament, and every one expected that a stream from the great fountain of wealth would bring extraordinary prosperity to his own home, while all the grievous burdens that now pressed on the springs of industry would be lightened or removed. Rack-rents would be reduced, oppressive taxes would be abolished, the demand for shop goods would be doubled or trebled, wages would be raised, and the general sum of human happiness would be vastly increased. "All young ladies imagine," said Sydney Smith, "that as soon as this bill is carried, they will be instantly married; schoolboys believe that gerunds and supines will be abolished, and that currant tarts must ultimately come down in price; the corporal and the sergeant are sure of double pay; bad poets expect a demand for their epics; and fools will be disappointed, as they always are."

The general election brought a large accession of strength to the reform party. The new parliament met on the 21st of June, and Mr. Manners Sutton was again elected speaker. In the speech from the throne, the king said, "Having had recourse to the dissolution of parliament, for the purpose of ascertaining the sense of my people on the expediency of a reform in the representation, I have now to recommend that important question to your earliest and most attentive consideration, confident that, in any measures which you may prepare for its adjustment, you will adhere to the acknowledged principles of the constitution, by which the rights of the crown, the authority of both houses of parliament, and the rights and liberties of the people are equally secured." The usual assurances were then given of the friendly disposition of all foreign powers; reference was made to the contest then going on in Poland, to the Belgian revolution, and the right of its people to regulate their own affairs, so long as the exercise of it did not endanger the security of neighbouring states. A paragraph was devoted to Portugal, lamenting that diplomatic relations with its government could not be re-established, though a fleet had been sent to enforce our demands of satisfaction. Strict economy was recommended, in the stereotype phraseology of royal speeches. Having referred to reduction of taxation, the state of the revenue, and to his desire to assist the industry of the country, by legislation on sound principles, the speech described the appearance of Asiatic cholera, and the precautions that had been taken to prevent its introduction into this country. The remainder of the speech was devoted to Ireland, where "local disturbances, unconnected with political causes," had taken place in various districts, especially in Clare, Galway, and Roscommon, for the repression of which the constitutional authority of the law had been vigorously and successfully applied; and thus the necessity of enacting new laws to strengthen the executive had been avoided, to avert which, the king said, would ever be his most earnest desire.

Addresses were agreed to in both houses without a division. The only discussion of interest that took place in

connection with them referred to the dissolution, and the circumstances under which it occurred. The opposition denounced it as an im politic proceeding, bearing the appearance of a revolutionary *coup d'état*. They charged the lord chancellor with making a false statement, in alleging that the commons had stopped the supplies, which, if true, was not the real cause of the dissolution, the cabinet having previously resolved upon that measure. Some of the ministers also, in their addresses to their constituencies—Sir James Graham, for example—conveyed the same injurious impression, stating that "the last division, which had the effect of delaying the supplies, left no alternative but that of abandoning the bill, or of appealing to the people." With this "factious" conduct the tory candidates were taunted at the elections, and they complained that they suffered in consequence much unmerited odium. The chancellor denied the imputation. Not only had the ministers decided upon the measure of dissolution, but the requisite commission had been actually prepared; and lord Brougham said, "Knowing this, I must have been the veriest dolt and idiot in the creation, if I had said what has been attributed to me. I stated a fact—that the dissolution being resolved upon, if there were wanting any justification for the step, the conduct of the house of commons the night before furnished ample justification for that proceeding." But the truth is, the opposition were smarting under the sense of defeat; they had been out-manœuvred by lord Grey, and defeated by the use of their own tactics.

Another ground of attack upon the government at the opening of the session was their conduct in not bringing up Mr. O'Connell for judgment. It was alleged that they had entered into a corrupt compromise with the great Irish agitator, in order to avert his hostility and secure his support at the elections. This was indignantly denied both by Mr. Stanley and lord Plunket. They contended that as the act expired with the parliament, so did the conviction, and that Mr. O'Connell could not be legally punished. This was the opinion of the law officers of the crown in Ireland, an opinion in which the English law officers concurred. Mr. Stanley said:—"Not only was there no collusion or compromise, but I should have been most glad if Mr. O'Connell could have been brought up for judgment; but then we have been told that we ought not to have dissolved parliament, because by so doing Mr. O'Connell had escaped. Now, no man can be more sensible than I am of the importance of showing to the people of Ireland that if Mr. O'Connell chooses to go beyond the law, he is not above the law; but, without meaning the slightest disrespect to Mr. O'Connell, I must say that if I put on the one hand the success of a great and important measure like the reform bill, and on the other the confinement of Mr. O'Connell in his majesty's gaol of Kilmainham for three, six, or nine months, I must say that what became of Mr. O'Connell was as the dust in the balance. Besides, the impression of the supremacy of the law was made upon the people by the fact of the verdict having been obtained against him, and an immediate change was wrought in the system of agitation, which, indeed, ceased. Such being the case, the question of what might be the personal consequences to any individual by the dissolution

became of still less importance than it was before." On this speech Mr. Roebuck makes some judicious reflections, which apply equally to other passages of Mr. O'Connell's life—"Mr. Stanley knew well when he launched this barbed and poisoned shaft the pain he was about to inflict, the anger he would inevitably create. The pleasure of giving this offence to Mr. O'Connell was too great a temptation for Mr. Stanley's small stock of prudence and forbearance. The immediate enjoyment and triumph were all his own; the mischief that followed was felt by his colleagues and his country. Had this favourable opportunity been taken advantage of, had the ministry conciliated Mr. O'Connell, the peace of Ireland might have been secured, the coercion bill would never have been called for, or thought necessary, and the whig administration would have escaped the disastrous consequences of that fatal measure—fatal alike to the stability of their cabinet and the welfare of the United Kingdom." They had another excellent opportunity of conciliation, without any violation of consistency, when Mr. O'Connell was lord mayor of Dublin. During his year of office, the viceregal court was completely estranged from the chief magistrate of the city, which he no doubt keenly felt; but when it lavished its attentions upon his successor, Mr. George Roe, he could no longer control his vexation, feeling that the slight was not only put upon him personally, but upon the church and people of which he was the champion. He accordingly introduced the repeal agitation into the Dublin corporation, and commenced a monster debate, which lasted several days, in defiance of the earnest remonstrances of the lord mayor, one of the most enlightened liberals and steady friends of the Roman catholics to be found in the ranks of the Irish protestants.

On the 24th of June, lord John Russell proposed his second edition of the reform bill. His speech on this occasion was a perfect contrast to the one with which he introduced the measure at first. There was no longer any hesitation or timidity. He was no longer feeling his way doubtfully in an untried path, or navigating without compass along a dangerous coast. He boldly launched out to sea, with his eye steadily fixed on the north star, certain of his course, and confident of the issue. The discussions of the previous session had thrown a flood of light upon the whole question. Sustained by the enthusiasm of the people, and animated by the sympathy of the majority around him on the ministerial benches, he spoke as if a greater and more vigorous mind had taken possession of his frame. He was strong in argument, cutting in sarcasm, defiant in tone, powerful in declamation. Borne by the power of public opinion to a higher and more commanding position, and proudly conscious of the elevation, he seemed ashamed of the petty proposals of former years, and felt his heart as well as his intellect expanding to the greatness of the new position. The bill was read a first time without opposition, the discussion being expressly reserved by Sir Robert Peel for the second reading, which was fixed for the 4th of July. In the meantime, the Irish bill was brought in by Mr. Stanley on the 30th of June, Messrs. O'Connell and Sheil complaining bitterly of the difference existing, to the disadvantage of

Ireland, between the proposed plans of reform for the two countries. On the following day the lord advocate brought in the bill relating to Scotland.

On the 4th of July, lord John Russell moved the second reading of the English reform bill. A debate of three nights followed, containing little or no novelty in the argument, nothing but a wearisome repetition of points that had been discussed all over the country, hundreds of times, during the last few months. The most interesting feature was the position of Sir Robert Peel, who unfortunately placed himself in the front of the battle against reform, in which he proved himself so able a general, that all enlightened friends of the country must have lamented his false position. Mr. Roebuck, writing in 1849, says:—"Sir Robert Peel, for the first time in his life, met a really hostile house of commons, and showed, by the dexterity with which he managed the prejudices and conciliated the good will of his opponents, that seldom in that house had there been seen any one more skilful in that curious species of disputative warfare which occurs in deliberative assemblies. To wise forethought, to large and generous views, to philosophy, to eloquence, the right honourable gentleman could lay no claim on this occasion. Astuteness, quickness, dexterity, and a certain plausibility that appeared like wisdom—all these were his. But looking at his conduct as that of a statesman, whose aim and purpose in life was the good of his country, his whole course of conduct was a glaring error. All his anticipations of evil have been signally belied, and he now stands a living witness of his own grievous mistake, both as regards his own position and the future destinies of his country. The convulsions with which he threatened us, as the necessary consequence of the reform bill, have not occurred. The internal condition of this country and its external relations have received no shock from the change which he so vehemently deprecated. The obedience of the people to the law is as great as ever; the wisdom and intelligence of the more instructed among us still guide and direct us. We are, in short, still a peaceful, enlightened, and improving people. If, then, the threatening denunciations of Sir Robert Peel were really believed by himself, certain it is he was most completely mistaken; if they were the mere artifice of an unscrupulous rhetorician, they have received a most signal rebuke." In a note, Mr. Roebuck adds the expression of an opinion from which few men will now be found to dissent—"There is not a shadow of reason for believing that Sir Robert Peel was not really in earnest. Being a man he was subject to error, and this was the capital mistake of his life."*

The division on the second reading took place on the 6th of July, when the numbers were—for the bill, 367; against it, 231; majority, 136. This result was a sufficient vindication of the appeal made to the country. The nation had now spoken constitutionally as to the evils of the old system of representation, and unmistakably expressed its determination to have it reformed. The measure might be delayed in the commons by vexatious opposition. But if it were to be defeated it must be by the house of lords,

* "Roebuck," vol. II, p. 182.

and it required some boldness in the majority of that assembly to take upon itself to hinder the other branch of the legislature from effecting its own reform. The bill now went into committee, when the case of each borough which it was proposed to disfranchise came under separate consideration. In schedule A were placed, alphabetically, all the boroughs which had less than 2,000 of population, and these were to be disfranchised. When Appleby, the first on the list, came under consideration, there was a keen contest as to the actual numbers then in the town, and the question turned upon the census, by which the committee were to be guided. By the census of 1821 the place would

be aware of the event which is casting its shadow before—namely, that the boroughs will be overtaken by the population returns of 1831. In another fortnight these returns would be laid before the house; and though his majesty's ministers now proceed expressly on the doctrine of a population of 2,000 and 4,000, they are guilty of the inconceivable absurdity of proceeding on the returns of 1821, when they can so soon be in possession of the census of 1831." The house, however, determined, by a majority of 118, to proceed upon the old census. A series of wearisome debates upon the details of each particular borough proceeded from day to day, and lasted for two months, the



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be disfranchised, but the inhabitants affirmed that by the census of 1831, then in progress, they were shown to have more than the requisite number; and Sir Robert Peel contended strenuously that they should wait for the more correct information. Mr. Wynn having moved a general resolution that the consideration of the schedules should be postponed till the result of the census was published, Sir Robert Peel said, with great show of reason, "After having obtained so large a majority as 136 on the principle of the bill, government would have acted wisely, even for the interests of the measure itself, to have postponed going into details, till they were in possession of better documents on which to proceed. They know what is coming; they

ministry invariably carrying their points by triumphant majorities. The tone of the discussion was often acrimonious, as might naturally be expected, from the weighty personal interests involved. Sir Edward Sugden solemnly declared that he considered the tone and manner, as well as the argument, of the attorney-general as indicating that they were to be dragooned into the measure. In the opinion of Sir Charles Wetherall, all this was "too capricious, too trifling, too tyrannical, and too insulting to the British public, to carry with it the acquiescence either of the majority within or the majority without the house." The ill temper and factious obstruction of the opposition greatly damaged the tory party out of doors and exasperated the people against

them. Indignant and impatient, the public began to cry out, "Are we bound to await the pleasure of these interested and factious opponents? Are we tamely to suffer them to employ the forms of the constitution thus unjustly as a means of delay? and shall we not quicken their tedious pace, by a significant exhibition of our power and our impatience?"

During the passage of the bill through committee, three important proposals were made—the first by lord Chandos—that tenants paying fifty pounds per annum for their holdings should have a vote in the counties. This was known as "The Chandos clause of the reform bill," which was carried on the 18th of August, by a majority of 84, the numbers being 232 and 148. Mr. Hume proposed that the colonies should be represented in the house of commons; but the motion was negatived without a division. Mr. Hunt, the celebrated radical reformer, moved that all householders paying rates and taxes should have votes; but, strange to say, household suffrage had in the committee but a single supporter, Mr. Hunt himself, who upon a division constituted the minority. Mr. Hume asked only nineteen members to represent 100,000,000 of inhabitants, including our Indian empire, to which he would give four representatives. It was certainly a small demand, but as a representation of our colonies and dependencies it was ludicrously inadequate. Those who consider the present state of our Australian colonies, governing themselves by means of their own effective legislatures, and consuming manifold more British produce than all the American colonies, will be amused to read that when Australia was mentioned as a place entitled to send a member to the imperial parliament, there was a loud laugh.

At length, after every clause of the bill, and every word and every place in each of the schedules had been the subjects of all possible motions and discussions—after a warfare which, for animosity and duration, is unparalleled in our parliamentary history, the bill was read a third time on the 21st of September, and passed by a majority of 109, the numbers being 345 to 236. The result was received with loud and long-continued cheering by the reformers in the house. The anxious and impatient multitude in the streets caught up the sounds of triumph with exultant enthusiasm; the acclamations of all classes of the people rang throughout the agitated metropolis. The news spread like wildfire through the country, and was everywhere received with ringing of bells, and other demonstrations of joy. As soon as the bill passed, an illumination of London was proposed, and an application was made to the lord mayor, in order to obtain his sanction, which was granted. The illumination was extensive, and those who refused to comply had their windows broken by the populace. In many places the people, whose patience had been so severely tested, began to lose their self-control, and were betrayed into riotous conduct. Mr. Macaulay, and other leading reformers in parliament, had warned the opposition of this danger, and it turned out that their apprehensions were not altogether visionary.

At length, on the 22nd of September, lord John Russell, attended by lord Althorp, and a great body of the most distinguished reformers, appeared at the bar of the house

of lords, and handed the English reform bill to the lord chancellor, praying the concurrence of their lordships. This scene has been made the subject of a great historical painting. The bill, without any opposition or remark from any conservative peer, was read a first time on the motion of earl Grey, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday week. On a subsequent day, a petition in favour of the bill having been presented, the marquis of Westminster asserted that the bill having passed the commons, to which it peculiarly belonged, the peers ought not to interfere with it. For this he was rebuked by lord Eldon, who said, "The proposition that the peers of England had no interest in this question, was the most absurd one that ever had been uttered or propounded, there or elsewhere. He hoped and believed that, when the question came to be discussed by their lordships, they would do their duty, fearlessly and manfully, and at the hazard of all the consequences. He should be utterly ashamed of himself if he gave way to the imputation of being prevented by fear from doing his duty. Bred as he had been in loyalty, living under the law, and revering the constitution of his country—now that he had arrived at the age of fourscore years, he would rather die in his place than suppress his indignation at such sentiments." "It is difficult," says lord Campbell, "to imagine the consternation now felt by him who had successfully resisted such mild reforms as taking away the punishment of death for the offence of stealing to the value of forty shillings in a dwelling-house, or five shillings in a shop, when he regarded the triumphant progress of a measure which was to operate a revolution, by the transference of political power, under the form of a legislative act, to be passed by king, lords, and commons."

The debate lasted a week, and was conducted with extraordinary ability, with a freshness of interest and eloquence which seemed hardly possible on so worn a subject. During its progress there was a skirmish between the lord chancellor and lord Eldon on the legality of public meetings. A peer stated that at a meeting of the Birmingham Political Union, attended by many thousands, an orator advised them, if the reform bill should be rejected by the lords, to refuse to pay taxes any more; that he called upon those present who supported his motion to hold up their hands; and that thereupon a forest of hands was held up, amidst immense cheering. The lord chancellor expressed disapprobation of the proceedings; nevertheless, he could not say, as a lawyer, that there was any breach of the king's peace, or any offence that the law knows how to punish. Lord Eldon took fire at this opinion. As a lawyer, he declared that every man who held up his hand was responsible for the language of the speaker, and he begged to tell the noble and learned lord that his seat on the woolsack could not be maintained by any one for six months, "if the doctrines now circulated through the country, and placed every morning under the review of every one, are suffered to be promulgated any longer."

The debate on the second reading commenced on the 3rd of October, with a speech from lord Grey—grave, elaborate, earnest, and impressive; simple, yet dignified. He described his own efforts in regard to parliamentary reform, spoke of the changes which had of necessity attended his opinions

on the subject, and of the circumstances which, at the close of his long career, when the conservative spirit is naturally strongest in every man, had led him to endeavour to put in practice the theories and speculations of his youth and manhood. And with the matured wisdom which a fine intellect and upright nature like his enabled him to acquire, he said—"I felt that the most prudent and the most safe measure I could propose would be a bold one; and this the more especially, because I felt that looking to the safety of the country as our true policy, I could effect what would satisfy the feelings and reasonable desires of the people, which would thus give me a position on which I could make a firm stand for the defence of the true principles of the constitution." Towards the close of his speech, he said—"Brave, I know your lordships to be, and angrily susceptible when approached with a menace. I fling aside all ideas of menace or intimidation; but I conjure you, as you value your rights and dignities, and as you wish to transmit them unimpaired to your posterity, to lend a willing ear to the representations of the people. Do not take up a position which will show that you will not attend to the voice of nine-tenths of the people, who call upon you in a tone too loud not to be heard, and too decisive to be misunderstood. The people are all but unanimous in support of the bill; the immense preponderance of county members, and members for populous places which have voted for it, is a sufficient proof of that. If this measure be refused, none other will be accepted—none less would, if accepted, be satisfactory. Do not, I beg, flatter yourselves that it is possible by a less effective measure than this to quiet the storm which will rage, and to govern the agitation which will have been produced. I certainly deprecate popular violence. As a citizen of a free state, and feeling that freedom is essentially connected with order, I deprecate it. As a member of the government, it is my duty to maintain tranquillity; but as a citizen, as a member of the government, as a man and a statesman, I am bound to look at the consequences which may flow from rejecting the measure. And although I do not say, as the noble duke (Wellington) did on another occasion, that the rejection of this measure will lead to civil war—I trust it will not produce any such effect—yet I see such consequences likely to arise from it, as make me tremble for the security of this house and of this country. Upon your lordships, then, as you value the tranquillity and prosperity of the country, I earnestly call to consider well before you reject this measure."

The most impressive part of this memorable oration was the appeal to the bishops. He said—"Let me respectfully entreat the right reverend prelates to consider that, if this bill be rejected by a narrow majority of the lay peers, and its fate should thus be decided, within a few votes, by the votes of the heads of the church, what will then be their situation with the country? You have shown that you are not indifferent to the signs of the times. You have introduced, in the way in which all such measures ought to be introduced by the heads of the church, measures of melioration. In this you have acted with a prudent forethought. You appear to have felt that the eyes of the country were upon you; that it is necessary to put your

house in order, and prepare for the coming storm. I implore you to follow on this occasion the same prudent course. There are many questions at present which may take a fatal direction, if upon a measure on which the nation has fixed its hopes, and which is necessary for its welfare, the decision of this house should, by means of their votes, be in opposition to the feelings and wishes of the people. You are the ministers of peace; earnestly do I hope that the result of your votes may be such as will tend to the peace, tranquillity, and happiness of the country."

It is a remarkable fact that the bishops were utterly deaf to this appeal. Through their votes, it may be said, the measure was rejected. Had the bishops voted the other way, it would have been carried by a majority of one. The majority against it was forty-one, and the number of bishops that voted against the bill was twenty-one—just enough to turn the scale. The solitary supporter of the measure on the episcopal bench was the bishop of Norwich. The people were violently exasperated by this conduct on the part of the heads of the national church. They could make allowance for the hereditary peers—for the feelings of caste in those who were born to wear coronets, and who were naturally proud of their "gentle blood;" but most of the bishops were commoners by birth, some of them sprung from the plebeian ranks, and it was felt that they ought not to have made the episcopal bench a barrier in the way of the concession of popular rights. The consequence was, that the bishops became odious to the people, as the men who threw out the bill.

A speaker at the great meeting of the Birmingham Political Union, anticipating this conduct of the bishops, expressed the popular feeling in the following terms:—"It is said the reverend fathers in God, the bishops, will oppose this bill; if they do, their fate, which even now is exceedingly doubtful, will be irrevocably sealed. The haughty remnants of the establishment will be buried in the dust, with a nation's execration for their epitaph: the splendid mitre will fall from the heads of the bishops; their crosses will fall as if from a palsied hand; their robes of lawn will be turned into garments of mourning; and my lord bishop of London may shut up his episcopal palace, and take out a licence for a beer-shop!"*

Lord Eldon described the progress of the debate from day to day in letters to members of his family. Lord Dudley and lord Haddington quite surprised and delighted the zealous old man—they spoke so admirably against the bill. Lord Carnarvon delivered a most excellent speech; but lord Plunket's speaking disappointed him. The fifth night of the debate was occupied by the lawyers. Lord Eldon—following lord Wynford and lord Plunket—solemnly delivered his conscience on this momentous occasion. He was ill and weak, and being an octogenarian, he might be said to be speaking on the edge of the grave. He expressed his horror of the new doctrines which had been laid down, with respect to the law of the country and its institutions. He could not consent to have all rights arising out of charters, and all the rights of close boroughs, swept away. Boroughs, he contended, were both property and trust.

* "Annual Register," 1831, p. 282.

Close corporations had as good a right to hold their charters under the great seal as any of their lordships had to their titles and their peerages. He said that he was a freeman of Newcastle-upon-Tyne; he had received his education in the corporation school of that town on cheap terms, as the son of a freeman; he had a right to it; and he had hoped that, when his ashes were laid in the grave, he might have given some memorandum that the boys there, situated as he was, might rise to be chancellors of England, if, having the advantage of that education, they were honest, faithful, and industrious. But this bill was to do away with corporations. He concluded by saying that he feared in his soul the bill would go the length of introducing in its train, if passed, universal suffrage, annual parliaments, and vote by ballot. It would unhinge the whole frame of society. It was altogether incompatible with the existence of the house of lords. He thus concluded: "I, my lords, have nearly run my race in this world, and must soon go to my Maker and my dread account. What I have said in this instance, in all sincerity, I have expressed out of my love to your lordships; and in that sincerity I will solemnly assert my heartfelt belief that with this bill in operation the monarchy cannot exist, and that it is totally incompatible with the existence of the British constitution."

Lord Campbell states that as a member of the house of commons he was present on the steps of the throne during this memorable debate, and heard lord Eldon's impressive speech, which was listened to with the most profound attention on all sides. "Nothing could be more affecting than the allusion by the octogenarian ex-chancellor to the days when he was a poor boy at the free grammar school at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and no one considered whether he proved very logically that the reform bill would cut off from others the chance of following in the same illustrious career. He was much exhausted before he sat down, and a noble earl from a distant part of the house very indecorously requested him to raise his voice; but this interruption excited a strong expression of sympathy and respect in his favour, as well from those who thought that he was haunted by delusive terrors, as those who believed that his vaticinations were inspired by the mystical lore which gives to the wizard in the sunset of life a glimpse of coming calamities." *

The closing night of the debate brought out the two most illustrious law lords in the house, who had long been rivals and competitors in the arenas of professional and political life—lord Brougham and lord Lyndhurst. Each was holding back in order to have the opportunity of replying to the other; but lord Lyndhurst managed to have the last word, the more excitable chancellor having lost patience, and flung himself into the debate. Mr. Roebuck contrasts their styles happily:—"The style of lord Brougham, though vigorous and sometimes happy, was too often diffuse, loose, and cumbrous, and always wanting in that exquisite accuracy, simplicity, and constantly equal and sustained force of his more sedate and self-collected antagonist. Looking back, however, and calmly weighing the

merits of these celebrated efforts of these, the two most distinguished orators of that day, we cannot, I think, fail to feel that, although in lord Lyndhurst's speech there was nothing superfluous—that all was severely, and, if I may use the expression, serenely great—yet that, in the higher, I ought to say the highest, excellence of impassioned reasoning, his rival was eminently superior. The cold sagacity of lord Lyndhurst shines steadily throughout the whole of his discourse; but we feel no enthusiasm—we are not touched by any appeal to a generous sentiment—we never appear to ourselves exalted by being called upon to share in and sympathise with any large and liberal policy. The speech of the lord chancellor produces effects of a very different description. Discursive, sometimes even trivial, it contains splendid and exciting appeals, wise and generous sentiments, cogent, effective argument; and we are anxious to believe him right, because, while he attempts to satisfy the understanding, he enlists in his favour the emotion of his hearers, by exhibiting an earnest solicitude for the well-being of his country and his kind."

The last night's debate continued till between six and seven o'clock on the morning of Saturday, the 8th of October. It was a night of intense anxiety, both in the house and out of doors. The space about the throne was thronged with foreigners and members of the other house. There was a number of ladies, peeresses, and their daughters, sitting there the whole night, manifesting their excitement in every way consistent with decorum. Palace Yard, and the space all round the house, was thronged with people waiting to hear the result of the division. The night was wet, however, and the debate was so protracted that the crowd had dispersed before morning. This was a matter of consolation to the opposition peers, who dreaded a mobbing. It was now broad daylight, and no sound was heard outside except the rolling of the carriages of the peers, who passed up Parliament Street as quietly as if they had come from disposing of a road bill. The fate of the bill was that day decided. For it, 158; against it—199—leaving a majority of 41. "The night was made interesting," wrote lord Eldon, "by the anxieties of all present. Perhaps, fortunately, the mob on the outside would not wait so long."

The result produced intense excitement, and led to rioting and outrage in the metropolis, and in some of the provincial towns. In London, the duke of Wellington, the duke of Cumberland, and the marquis of Londonderry, were assaulted in the street, and rescued with difficulty from the fury of the mob. Lord Londonderry, who had signalled himself during the debate by the violence of his opposition, was struck senseless from his horse by a shower of stones at the gate of the palace, amidst cries of "Murder him! Cut his throat!" Persons respectably dressed, and wearing ribbons round their arms, took the lead on these occasions, giving orders, and, rushing forward from the crowd. The houses of the duke of Newcastle, lord Bristol, and all other anti-reforming peers, had been visited by the mob, and left without glass in their windows. All the shops in town were shut. "The accounts from Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and other places," wrote lord Eldon, "are very uncomfortable. I heard last night that the king was

* "Life of Eldon," p. 548.

frightened by the appearance of the people outside of St. James's."

Although the division took no one by surprise, as the rejection of the bill by the lords was expected, yet the shock to society was very violent. The funds suddenly fell, and there was that feeling of vague anxiety in the public mind which often portends some great calamity. At Derby, they broke open the gaol, and demolished the property of the anti-reformers of the place. At Nottingham there was serious rioting, which ended in the utter destruction by fire of the ancient castle, once the property of the duke of Newcastle, who had given violent offence, by his rash declaration with regard to his voters at Newark, "that he had a right to do what he pleased with his own." The popular fury, however, soon subsided, and the public mind regained tranquillity, in the full assurance that the carrying of the bill was only a question of time, and that the popular cause must ultimately triumph. What most materially contributed to the restoration of public confidence was the fact that the king, alarmed at the prospect of a revolution, implored the ministers to retain their places, and to shape their bill so as to disarm their opponents; and on the following Monday, in the house of commons, lord Ebrington moved a vote of confidence in the government, to the effect that, while the house lamented the present state of a measure in favour of which the opinion of the country had been so unequivocally expressed, and which had been matured after the most anxious and laborious discussions, they felt imperatively called upon to re-assert their firm adherence to its principles and leading provisions, and their unabated confidence in the integrity, perseverance, and ability of the ministers, who, in introducing it and conducting it so well, had consulted the best interests of the country. This motion was carried by the large majority of 131; the numbers being 329 to 198. Thus supported by the commons, the ministers retained their places; and the king, on the 20th of October, prorogued the parliament in person, in a speech which the lords might take as the king's answer to their note, telling them in effect that by their obstinate bigotry they were setting themselves in antagonism to the two other estates of the realm, and that in their conduct and position lay the real danger to the constitution. His majesty said: "To the consideration of the important question of the reform of the house of commons, the attention of parliament must necessarily again be called at the opening of the ensuing session; and you may be assured of my unaltered desire to promote its settlement by such improvements in the representation as may be found necessary for securing to my people the full enjoyment of their rights, which, in combination with those of the other orders of the state, are essential to the support of our free constitution."

Under the trying circumstances in which they were placed, lord Grey and his colleagues displayed a firmness and courage which entitled them to the everlasting gratitude of the country. The pluck of lord John Russell in particular had quite an inspiring effect on the nation. Replying to a vote of thanks to him and lord Althorp, which had been passed by the Birmingham Political Union, the noble paymaster of the forces used an antithetical ex-

pression, which has become historical, and which, considering that the faction to which he alluded was the majority of the order to which he himself belonged, must be admitted to be one of extraordinary boldness. He said: "I beg to acknowledge with heartfelt gratitude the undeserved honour done me by 150,000 of my countrymen. Our prospects are now obscured for a moment, and I trust only for a moment. *It is impossible that the whisper of faction should prevail against the voice of the nation.*"*

Encouraged by language like this from ministers of the crown, the voice of the nation became louder and more menacing every day. Meetings, attended by vast multitudes of angry and determined men, were held in Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and most of the large towns, especially where the democratic element was predominant. The worst and most destructive of all the riots was at Bristol. Its recorder was Sir Charles Wetherall, noted for his vehemence in opposing reform. Considering the excitement and desperation that had been recently exhibited throughout the kingdom, it was scarcely prudent for Sir Charles Wetherall to appear in Bristol at all on that occasion. At all events, he should have entered the city privately, and discharged the duties of his office as quietly as possible. Instead of that, he made a public and pompous entry into the city on the 29th of October, accompanied by the magistrates and a cavalcade of the tory gentry. This offensive pageant was naturally followed by a mob of disorderly characters, hissing and groaning. They soon began to throw stones and brickbats, especially when the respectable citizens at the commercial rooms received their polemical recorder with three cheers. They assailed the mansion-house with a shower of missiles. The mayor having called upon them in vain to retire, the riot act was read, but the military were not called out to enforce it. Instead of dispersing, the mob overpowered the constables and drove them back, forced open the doors of the mansion-house, smashed the furniture, and armed themselves with the iron rails, which they tore up in front of the building. Sir Charles Wetherall and the magistrates providentially escaped by a back door, and the recorder made an undignified retreat from the city. The military were at length called out, and after some time the disturbance seemed to be quelled, and the dragoons, who had been much fatigued, retired for the night. Bristol, it is said, has always been distinguished for a bad mob. There are foul elements in most large seaports, which it is dangerous to stir up. In Bristol, on this occasion, the mob became the very incarnation of the genius of destruction, which ran riot in such a way as to indicate the rule of literal madness. The rioters got the impression that the military would not act, and multitudes of the worst characters assembled next day, bent on mischief and plunder. The bargemen from the adjoining canals—desperadoes with the wild, fierce aspect of banditti—coal-heavers, porters, contingents from all the dangerous classes, the reprobates of society, thronged forth from cellar and garret, from the lurking places of professional thieves, and

* "Annual Register," 1831, p. 283.



THE BRISTOL REFORM RIOTS—SCENE IN QUEEN'S SQUARE ON THE NIGHT OF THE 30TH OCTOBER, 1831.

From a Print published by Mr. Lane, Clifton.

the haunts of the vile of every description, like birds of prey flocking to the battle-field on the morning after the fight, with a ravenous appetite, to feast upon the dead. Such classes are always too glad to have some opportunity for outrage, some excuse for breaking down the fences of property, and preying upon their neighbours. Accordingly, they first proceeded to the mansion-house, broke open its cellars, and regaled themselves with their contents. The military were again brought out to quell the now intoxicated rioters; but there was no magistrate there to give orders, and the troops were marched back to the barracks. The mob then proceeded in detached parties, each having a work of destruction assigned to it. One party went to the bridewell, broke open the doors,

were filled with a maniacal multitude, yelling in triumph and reeling with intoxication; many of them lying senseless on the pavement, and not a few consumed in the fires which they had raised. In addition to the public buildings, forty-two dwelling-houses and warehouses were burned. The loss of property was estimated at half a million sterling. This work of destruction commenced on Sunday, and was carried on during the night. The sky was reddened with the conflagration, while the military, who had been sent into the country to avoid irritating the people and the paralysed authorities, looked on helplessly from a distance at the progress of destruction. On Monday morning, however, they recovered from their consternation, and resolved to make an effort to save the city. The



LONDON BRIDGE.

liberated the prisoners, and then set the building on fire. Another went to the new gaol, and performed a similar operation there. The Gloucester county prison was next broken open and consigned to the flames. The principal toll-houses about the city shared the same fate. The bishop's palace was pillaged and burned to the ground. Becoming more maddened as they proceeded, their passions raging more furiously at the sight of the conflagration as it spread, the mob resolved that no public building should be left standing. The mansion-house, the custom-house, the excise office, and other public buildings were wrapt in flames, which were seen bursting forth with awful rapidity on every side. The blackened and smoking walls of buildings already burned were falling frequently with terrific crashing, while Queen's Square and the adjoining streets

magistrates ordered the military to act, and under the command of captain Wetherall, of the 14th, the dragoons charged the rioters in earnest. A panic now seized the mob, who fled in terror before the flashing swords of the troops and the trampling hoofs of their horses, some of them so terror-stricken that they rushed for safety into burning houses. The number of persons killed and wounded during this terrible business was ascertained to be 110, and it is supposed that many more lost their lives in the burning houses that were never heard of. The ringleaders were tried in December, when many persons were convicted, of whom three underwent the punishment of death. The lord chief justice Tenterden, who presided at the trial, expounded the law with regard to riots, which he declared to be this: "Every citizen has a right to

interfere to prevent the destruction of life or property without waiting for orders from a magistrate. Soldiers do not cease to be citizens, and they, too, have the right to defend themselves, and, without waiting for orders from the civil authorities, they are, in extreme cases, bound to use their arms in defence of the lives and property of the inhabitants."

Some important lessons were taught by these deplorable events to persons in authority, civil and military, as well as to the public at large. First, the danger of inflaming the minds of the ignorant masses by appeals to physical force, and by the denunciation of individuals, pointing them out as objects of popular vengeance; secondly, the danger of leaving the masses in such a state of ignorance, that they can be driven to lawless courses by such appeals; thirdly, that it is a grievously false humanity in magistrates to allow rioting to go ahead, and not to trample out promptly and sternly the first sparks of lawlessness and incendiarism. Early in the following year the mayor and the commanding officer, colonel Brereton, were brought to trial for neglect of duty. The mayor was acquitted, as not having been adequately supported by the military; but colonel Brereton's humanity led to the most painful consequences. His trial began on the 9th of January following, and lasted four days, during which, as the proofs against him accumulated, he was overwhelmed with agony of mind. On the night of the 12th he did not visit, as was his custom, the chamber of his two motherless daughters. He was heard walking for hours about his room during that night, and in the morning, when the court assembled, it was announced that the prisoner had shot himself through the heart.

This tragedy produced a painful sensation through the whole community. The facts brought to light at the trial had the effect of dissociating the Bristol outrages from the cause of reform, with which they had no real connection. Still the leading anti-reformers were extremely obnoxious to the people; and as men's minds became more and more heated, in reiterating demands for national rights, withheld by a faction, extreme opinions grew into greater favour. For example, a national political union was formed in London, and held a great meeting, at which Sir Francis Burdett presided. This body issued a manifesto, in which they demanded annual parliaments, universal suffrage, and vote by ballot. This was a legitimate demand; but they broached communistic and subversive doctrines when they proclaimed "that all property honestly acquired is sacred and inviolable; that all men are born equally free, and have certain natural and inalienable rights; that all hereditary distinctions of birth are unnatural, and opposed to the equal rights of man, and ought to be abolished; and that they would never be satisfied with any laws that stopped short of these principles." Altogether, the country was in a most dangerous crisis in the autumn of 1831.

CHAPTER XXI.

Revolutionary Publications—Loyal Demonstrations—Opening of London Bridge—Provision for the Princess Victoria—Coronation of the King and Queen—New Peers and Baronets—The Tory Peers tampering

with the King—The Duke of Wellington labours to Extricate him from Whig Bondage—General Apprehension of a Great Convulsion—Edward Irving—Dr. Arnold—The Cholera—Ignorance of Sanitary Laws—The Plague of Revolution, and its Causes—New Political Combination, headed by the Duke of Wellington—Negotiations for a Compromise on the Reform Bill by Lord Wharncliffe—The Duke of Wellington's Predictions—Re-assembling of Parliament—Third Introduction of the Reform Bill—Lord John Russell's Alarm—Alterations in the Reform Bill—Combination of Numbers and Property—Debate on the Second Reading—The Reform Bill in Committee—Passing of the Bill—Debate on the Second Reading in the Lords—Lord Grey's Speech—Lord Shrewsbury—Lord Durham and the Bishop of Exeter—The Bishop of Gloucester's Defence of the Episcopal Bench—The Bill read a Second Time—Protest of the Duke of Wellington and others—Public Excitement during the Easter Recess—Proceedings of Political Unions—Aggregate Meetings at Birmingham—Rise of the Opposition Peers—Lord Lyndhurst—Resignation of the Ministry—Lord Lyndhurst consulted by the King—Sir Robert Peel declines the Premiership—The Duke of Wellington's Attempt to form a Cabinet—Unpopularity of the King and Queen—Refusal to pay Taxes—Withholding the Supplies—Threats of Insurrection—Lord Ebrington's Motion for an Address to the King—Mr. Macaulay on the Position of the Opposition Lords—Sir Robert Inglis—Failure of the Duke of Wellington to form a Ministry—The King's Alternative: a Creation of Peers or Civil War—He submits to Lord Grey's Terms—The Third Reading carried—The King refuses to give his Assent in Person.

THE revolutionary spirit imported from France was manifested to an alarming extent in periodical publications during the year 1831. The writers indulged in a freedom of speech so daring that it is not surprising that the government were obliged to have recourse to prosecution in order to suppress the nuisance. A paper called *The Poor Man's Guardian* instituted a comparison between the French and the English governments, which shows how completely levelling and republican were the ideas of a section of the working classes at that time. Charles X. of France was Mr. Charles Capet, and they spoke of himself and his ministers as Messrs. Capet, Polignac, &c. In like manner the English government consisted of Messrs. "Guelph," Grey, Brougham, Denman, &c. The only difference between Charles Capet and William Guelph, they said, was, that Capet acted like a hero, and Guelph like a dastardly assassin. He and his minions had not courage to bite with their own weapons. "But," said the writers, "they will mangle us with the teeth of a diseased bloodhound; they will stab us with the dagger of a dead assassin. Cowardly tyrants! Are the people of England such sorry slaves that they can only talk and sing of freedom? Will not they, too, resist the laws of these tyrants? Will not they, too, have a glorious revolution?" "Citizen Hetherington" was the publisher of *The Poor Man's Guardian*. He was summoned before a magistrate, and fined for an infringement of the law, when he was defended by *The Republican*, another journal of the same character, in the following strain:—"He considers the knowledge-taxing mandate of the boroughmongering parliamentarians as much binding on the unrepresented people of England as the contemptible, impotent ordinances of Charles Capet were binding on the people of France. He who approves or enforces them must be a malignant fiend, and ought to be hunted out of civilised society. He who submits to them is a contemptible object and cowardly slave, a disgrace to his country, and an enemy to his fellow-citizens. Acting on this incontrovertible principle, he defies the ordinances of self-elected tyrants; he appeals to his fellow-citizens to support him in

his honest, public-spirited exertions. His publications were instituted for the sole benefit of the cheated, plundered, and insulted multitude, to whom he appeals for protection against the diabolical machinations of the villains in power." *The Prompter*, another of the penny publications, raised the cry, "Down with kings, priests, and lords. Either in war or in peace, kingcraft, priestcraft, and lordcraft is a system of murder, plunder, and spoliation." It does not appear, however, that these denunciations had any effect upon the feelings of the masses, so far as king William was personally concerned. The coronation of the king and queen seems to have been prudently postponed, lest in the existing temper of the public mind, disappointed and exasperated at the resistance to reform, there might have been some outrage, or lest the expense of the pageant should add fuel to the popular discontent. But there was a demonstration in London in favour of royalty, with which the court had every reason to be content. On the 1st of August, the anniversary of the accession of the house of Hanover, the king and queen went by water from Somerset House, with their retinues, in their state barges, to witness the opening of the new London Bridge. The lord mayor and corporation made extraordinary efforts for their entertainment, among which was an ascent in his balloon by the "intrepid aeronaut," Mr. Green. The king ascended the long flight of steps from the water without any appearance of fatigue, and received an enthusiastic greeting from the countless multitudes that crowded around the scene. The keys of the city having been presented by the lord mayor, and graciously returned, the royal party proceeded to a pavilion that had been erected for their accommodation. Having inspected the bridge, they returned to the pavilion, and partook of a splendid banquet provided by the corporation. Many members of the royal family were present, including the duchesses of Gloucester, Cambridge, and Cumberland, the duke of Sussex, prince George of Cumberland, and prince George of Cambridge. The lord mayor was permitted to propose the king's health, and Sir Claudius Hunter the queen's. His majesty then, out of a gold cup, drank to the trade and commerce of the city of London, after which the loving cup went round among the members of the royal family. Finally, the king proposed the health of the lord mayor and lady mayoress, after which the royal party returned in their barges to Somerset House, followed by the state barges of the lord mayor and the city companies, gorgeously decorated. The multitude along the banks hailed the spectacle with acclamation. The king enjoyed the demonstration exceedingly, and as a proof of his satisfaction, the lord mayor (Key) was next day created a baronet. On the same day their majesties entered the house of peers, when the king gave his assent to the queen's dower bill, after which she rose and curtsied three times to the gentlemen below the bar, members of the house of commons.*

On the 3rd of August, a message having been received from the king, recommending an increased allowance to the duchess of Kent and the princess Victoria, earl Grey,

in the house of peers, moved an address, representing the importance of making a further provision for the education, maintenance, and support of the honour and dignity of the princess, as heiress presumptive to the crown, which was agreed to; and in the house of commons, lord Althorp proposed an additional income of £10,000 a-year for the purpose, which was also agreed to. The princess, only child of the late duke of Kent and of the princess Louisa Victoria of Saxe-Coburg, widow of the hereditary prince of Leiningen, was born May 24th, 1819, the year before her father's death. She was now twelve years old.

The coronation of their majesties was fixed for the 8th of September, and the necessary alterations were made in Westminster Abbey for the occasion. On the morning of the appointed day numerous labourers, in scarlet jackets and white trousers, were busy completing the arrangements. Forty private gentlemen acted as pages of the earl marshal, and devised a novelty in the way of costume, clothing themselves in blue frock coats, white breeches and stockings, a crimson silk sash, and a small, ill-shaped hat, with a black ostrich feather, each provided with a gilt staff. Their duty was to conduct persons provided with tickets to their proper places. Three-fourths of the members of the house of commons were in military uniform, and a few in Highland costume. The equipages produced for the occasion were magnificent, the lord chancellor rivalling the lord mayor in this display; but neither of them came up to the Austrian ambassador in finery. The street procession commenced on Constitution-hill, and attracted thousands of spectators. Their majesties' carriage was drawn by eight horses, four grooms on each side, two footmen at each door, and a yeoman of the guard at each wheel. The crowds were in good humour with the spectacle, and manifested no disposition to dispense with royalty. The presence of the queen presented a contrast to the coronation of George IV. Of the regalia, the ivory rod with the dove was borne by lord Campbell, the sceptre and the cross by lord Jersey, and the crown by the duke of Beaufort. The queen followed, supported by the bishops of Winchester and Chichester, and attended by five gentlemen pensioners on each side, the train borne by the duchess of Gordon, assisted by six daughters of earls. There was no banquet, Government having the fear of the economists before their eyes, and the nation having too lively a recollection of the coronation folly of George IV.; but the king entertained a large party of the royal family and nobility, with the principal officers of his household. The princess Victoria and her mother were then in the Isle of Wight. Their absence from the ceremonial and the banquet was the subject of comment; but it was subsequently explained by the fact that the princess was in too delicate a state of health at the time to come to town and bear so much excitement. In London the day was kept as a holiday, and at night there was a general illumination. "In short," says the duke of Buckingham, "there seemed so universal a satisfaction throughout the island, in consequence of this necessary connection of the king with his people having been performed, that the well-disposed began to believe that

* "Courts and Cabinets of William IV. and Victoria," vol. i., pp. 237-40.

democratic opinions had totally disappeared from the land."^{*}

The king had previously made some additions to the English peerage. His eldest son was ennobled by the titles of earl of Munster, viscount Fitzclarence, and baron Tewkesbury. His son-in-law, the earl of Errol, in the Scottish peerage, was made a British peer, by the title of baron Kilmarnock. Subsequently, the following were admitted to the British peerage:—lord Fingal, lord Sefton, lord Leitrim, lord Kinnaird, and lord Dover. Many other additions were made afterwards, and in this way the government obtained twenty-two votes in the upper house. In other quarters, ministers availed themselves of the royal prerogative to strengthen their position there, and overcome the difficulties in the way of the reform bill. Twenty-eight baronets were created, and the honour of knighthood was conferred upon about an equal number. On the whole, lord Grey found the king more accommodating than might have been expected. The leaders of the opposition persuaded themselves that his majesty was not a free agent, and they were torturing their brains to invent some plan by which he might be extricated from what they believed to be his degraded and dangerous position. The duke of Wellington was evidently very much pressed by his followers to endeavour to open the sovereign's eyes. In December, lord Eldon had an interview with the duke of Wellington, and sat with him an hour in deep conversation, from which it appeared that he had written letters to a great personage, meaning the king. In July he had written to the duke of Buckingham, revealing the state of his mind. There was no one more anxious than the duke "to extricate the country from its present difficulties;" but he must take care that in the choice of the efforts to be made for that purpose, he did not augment their number and intensity, rather than obtain any relief. He considered that the king had brought upon himself all his troubles by dissolving parliament; and he complained that his majesty had made no effort, nor manifested any wish to make an effort, to extricate himself. He described the king and his ministers, and a settled majority of the house of commons, as being "allied with the mob, the radicals, the dissenters of all persuasions, against the gentlemen of property of the country, the church, and all the establishments, religious, commercial, banking, political, &c."[†] The duke did not enter the new year with better prospects or in better spirits. In a letter, written on the 2nd of January, to the duke of Buckingham, he observed:—"When I wrote to the king in November, on the armament of the political associations, I had in hand a case on which I was certain that nineteen-twentieths of the whole country would concur with me. I did it likewise at a period of the year at which I knew that, if the king wished to get rid of the bonds in which he is held, I could assist him in doing so. There was time to call a new parliament, and the sense of the country would have been taken on a question on which there could be no doubt. What did the king do? He concurred in every opinion which I gave

him. His ministers saw their scrape, and prevailed upon the press and the political associations to alter their course; they issued a mock proclamation, and promised the king a bill to repress the associations, which promise they never performed, and the king is quite satisfied, and goes on with them as well as ever!" He then puts the difficulties of his position very strongly, in order to quiet the importunity of his friends. The mutiny bill would expire on the 25th of March. What was to be done in the meantime? He must see the king, and advise him to refuse to create peers—tell him that he would form a government, convince him that he could thus protect him—form a government, dissolve parliament, have a general election, &c. Could all this be done in time, and could he convince the king that this course would be attended with success? He was by no means sanguine upon this point. "If," said the duke, "he should find that I saw the risks and dangers which, as an honest and experienced man, I could not avoid seeing, he would shake me off, and would found his compliance with recommendations of his ministers even upon what should have passed with me. Believe me, my dear duke, that no man feels more strongly than I do the dangers of our situation. The great mischief of all is the weakness of our poor king, who cannot or will not see his danger, or the road out of it when it is pointed out to him; and he allows himself to be deceived and trifled with by ministers. I know that the times are approaching, if not come, when men must consider themselves as on a field of battle, and must sacrifice themselves for the public interest."^{*}

The duke of Wellington was not singular in his despondency with regard to the course of events, and the perilous nature of the crisis; some of the greatest thinkers of the age were profoundly affected by the conviction that they were on the eve of a great convulsion—that the end of the world was at hand, and that our globe was about to emerge into a new state of existence. The unsettled state of society accounts, in some measure, for the prevalence of the delusions of Edward Irving—then in the height of his fame; delusions from which such minds as Dr. Arnold's did not wholly escape. In reply to inquiries about the gift of tongues, that great man wrote:—"If the thing be real, I should take it merely as a sign of the coming day of the Lord. However, whether this be a real sign or no, I believe the day of the Lord is coming—i.e., the termination of one of the great ages of the human race; whether the final one of all, or not, that, I believe, no created being knows, or can know. . . . My sense of the evils of the times, and to what purpose I am bringing up my children, is overwhelmingly bitter. All the moral and physical world appear so exactly to announce the coming of the great day of the Lord—i.e., a period of fearful visitation, to terminate the existing state of things—whether to terminate the whole existence of the human race, neither man nor angel knows—that no entireness of private happiness can possibly close my mind against the sense of it."[†]

Another cause of the general uneasiness and depression

* "Courts and Cabinets of William IV.," &c., vol. I., p. 357.

† Ibid., vol. I., p. 335.

* "Courts and Cabinets of William IV.," &c., vol. I., p. 385.

† "Life of Dr. Arnold," vol. I., p. 302-3.

of the public mind was the appearance, in the autumn of this year, of the mysterious visitant, cholera morbus. This disease had been long known in India, but it was only of late years that it began to extend its ravages over the rest of the world. It followed the great tracks of commerce, or the march of armies, stealing slowly along the banks of rivers, the great roads and lines of traffic, and attacking city after city in succession. No barriers, no military cordons, no quarantines were able to arrest its progress. It was the pestilence walking in darkness, penetrating unseen, crossing rivers, mountains, deserts, and seas. Within two years it had carried off nearly a million of people in Asia. It made its first appearance in England at Sunderland, on the 26th of October, 1831. Its name had come before, spreading terror in every direction. The stories of its sudden effects, its dreadful ravages, its fatal power of quickly transforming vigour and beauty into utter weakness and agony, and of producing hideous defacement, had an appalling influence on persons of weak nerves, and diffused a contagion of alarm throughout all circles. They read of relatives flying from the couch of its victims; of whole families falling in rapid succession; of the rites of sepulture being abandoned to hirelings; of corpses being shot coffinless, in cart-loads, into unconsecrated holes; and they trembled at the approach of the dreadful plague to their own neighbourhoods. It appeared in Edinburgh on February 6th, 1832, at Rotherhithe and Limehouse on February 13th, and in Dublin on March 3rd, 1832. In all these places, and in many others, the mortality was very great. But it was still more severe on the continent. The deaths in Paris alone, between March and August, were no less than 18,000. But the fears of the community exaggerated the dangers of cholera just as they exaggerated the dangers of revolution. We know now that cholera could have been in a great measure averted, and that its mystery lay in our ignorance. We know that it always fell most heavily on the inhabitants of towns, hamlets, or houses where deficient drainage and ventilation, accumulations of putrescent matters, intemperance, and want of personal cleanliness most prevailed. It selected for the scenes of its habitation and its triumphs the usual haunts of typhus fever; and it effected its greatest ravages in the neighbourhoods of rivers and marshes. In London it was most virulent on the level of the Thames, and lost its power in exact arithmetical ratio to the height of the districts above that level. If it attacked a town or an army, and the inhabitants or the soldiers decamped, and scattered themselves over the country, in the clear air and pure sunshine, they escaped. It was possible, therefore, to guard against its power by a proper system of drainage and sewage; by proper ventilation; by personal cleanliness, temperance, and regularity; by the abolition of nuisances, stagnant pools, and open ditches; and by wholesome regimen and regular exercise in the open air. It is by attention to such means—that is, by cleansing away all filthiness, and by draining off all corruption—that public health is maintained, and that communities may bid defiance to the plague. It is even so with the plague of revolution. It was rendered formidable, it was attracted by political cor-

ruption. It was to be averted by throwing open our close boroughs to the light and air of freedom, by ventilating our electoral system, by draining the swamps of political corruption, and by subjecting the body politic to the influence of proper sanitary arrangements. This is just what the Reform Bill did for the British constitution. It was what lord Grey, lord Brougham, lord John Russell, and their colleagues felt to be absolutely necessary for the salvation of their country—to prevent political collapse; and what the duke of Wellington and his colleagues could not see, because they were still ignorant of social science, inhaling the morbid influence of that system which they laboured so strenuously to perpetuate.

It was a very busy time in the political world, that brief recess between the prorogation and the re-assembling of parliament in the last month of 1831. The old tory party had been broken up; but a new combination was spontaneously formed around the duke of Wellington, who was regarded as a rock breasting the fierce waves of revolution. Of this new party each individual had a scheme to propose, a doubt to solve, or a suggestion to make; and the duke was constrained by a sense of duty to answer all their communications, which, with all his well-known brevity, caused an incessant occupation of his time, and a severe strain upon his faculties. He was at his desk at six o'clock in the morning writing letters, and still continued to write after dinner in the drawing-room, while Walmer Castle was full of guests, regardless of the buzz of conversation around him. He did not forget that the alarmists, who were now pressing upon him for guidance and protection, were the very men who had chased him from office a short time before. "You see how they come about me," he once observed; "they never were satisfied till they got rid of me as a minister, and now they want me to put my neck in the halter for them, as if I cared one farthing for their personal influence, or for their boroughs either, except that I know the importance of the latter."

As the government were determined to persevere, and to carry the reform bill by means of a large creation of peers, if necessary, some of the leading members of the opposition in the upper house began to think seriously of their position, a sort of appeal having been made to them, in a letter from the king's private secretary, suggesting the prudence of compromise and concession, in order to save his majesty from the painful alternative of a creation of peers. Accordingly, lords Wharnccliffe and Harrowby put themselves in communication with lord Grey, and this fact was announced by the former in a letter to the duke of Wellington, stating that he entertained good hope of being able to arrange such a plan of compromise as would prevent the necessity of a second rejection of the bill by the lords, and so enable them to alter and amend it when it came into committee. The duke, in reply to this, said that he was glad of a possibility of an arrangement by mutual concession on the reform question; and that, for his part, all that he desired to see, under the new system, was a chance of a government for this hitherto prosperous, happy, and great country, which should give security to life and property hereafter. "The political unions," he

said, "had assumed an organisation which any man who could read would pronounce to be for military purposes, and nothing else. Their creed was only so far better than that of the United Irishmen of 1798, that they did not attempt to keep it secret; and this was no merit, because secrecy would deprive them of one of their most efficient instruments—namely, terror. He was, therefore, for putting down the unions with a strong hand. That once done, the reform of parliament might be considered with honour and safety, if not with advantage. Till those unions were put down, it did not signify much, in reality, what course was taken." In the meantime, lord Wharnccliffe had waited by appointment upon the prime minister at his house, in Sheen, where he discussed the reform question with him for two hours, without ever adverting to the political unions, and he reported the issue in a long letter to the duke of Wellington. The result was that lord Grey made some trifling concessions in matters of detail, and that in return lord Wharnccliffe gave him the assurance that he would do what he could to bring the opposition lords to take a more favourable view of the ministerial scheme and its probable consequences. This was followed by cordial shaking of hands, and permission was given on either side to communicate with intimate friends and colleagues. The duke of Wellington, however, declined to take any part in those deliberations. He believed that the government *could* be carried on, though with difficulty, under the existing system; but under the system which the reform bill would introduce, he doubted if the government could be carried on at all. On the other hand, lord Wharnccliffe forcibly put the case of continued resistance. To what could it lead? The house of lords by its rejection of the bill, had given the country an opportunity of expressing its will. But all the demonstrations had been violently against the peers, scarcely any in their favour; and where any support had been feebly shown, it was with the condition that important concessions should be made. Where, then, was the battle to be fought? Was the house of lords to fight against the crown, the government, the commons, and the country? This was impossible. But the duke was still intractable. Lord Wharnccliffe, he said, seemed to have forgotten "that the king and his government had entered apparently into combination with the mob for the destruction of property. Consequently, even magistrates were afraid to do their duty; and if gentlemen came forward to express the sentiments which all the world knew they entertained, they ran the risk of being hunted through their own parks and gardens." This was, perhaps, an allusion to what had occurred to lord Wharnccliffe himself, in Yorkshire, when it was said he narrowly escaped with his life, after the adverse decision in the lords. Lord Wharnccliffe persevered in his efforts to change the duke's mind, but in vain. What his grace feared, he said, was "the destruction of the race of gentlemen in the country, and, with them, of its glory, its honour, and its prosperity. For it was a fallacy to believe that any class—least of all, the lowest—would benefit by that catastrophe. He defied all the political economists in the world to provide for more than 22,000,000 of people half so well as all the classes of the

population were provided for at that moment." If the bill were to pass, even with lord Wharnccliffe's improvement, "neither lord Grey, nor any nobleman of his circle, nor any gentleman of his caste, would govern the country six weeks after the reformed parliament met." Nothing came of lord Wharnccliffe's negotiation with the government, which declined to make any material concession. It had the effect, however, of splitting the conservative party in the upper house, breaking the phalanx of the opposition, and thus preparing the way for the triumph of the government.

So strongly did the latter feel the urgency of the case, that parliament was called together again on the 6th of December. It was opened by the king in person, who, in his speech, recommended the speedy settlement of the reform question; referred to the opposition made to the payment of tithes in Ireland; announced the conclusion of a convention with France for the suppression of the African slave trade; deplored the outrages at Bristol; and recommended improvements in the municipal police of the kingdom. On the 12th, lord John Russell introduced the reform bill the third time. It is said that his manner, like his proposal, had undergone a striking alteration. His opening speech was not now a song of triumph, inspired by the joyous enthusiasm of the people. He no longer treated the opposition in a tone of almost contemptuous defiance. The spirit which had dictated the celebrated reply to the Birmingham political union about the voice of the nation and the whisper of a faction, seemed to have died within him. The feeling gradually stole upon him and his friends "that they had raised a too mighty spirit—one which would soon be unawed by their exorcism; and which might, in its fury, destroy the whole order to which the noble lord and most of his colleagues belonged, making no distinction between friend or foe." No longer anxious to excite and inflame, he dwelt upon the advantages that would be produced by reform, and spoke of the danger of further resistance in a tone of unfeigned alarm. He used this topic now, not as a rhetorical weapon, but as a terrible truth—"one appalling to himself and his friends; and in accents of sincere, unsimulated affright, he besought his aristocratic opponents to forego their resistance."*

Lord John Russell proceeded to explain the changes and modifications that had been made in the bill since it was last before the house. As the census of 1831 was now available, the census of 1821 was abandoned. But a new element was introduced in order to test the claim of a borough to be represented in parliament. Numbers alone were no longer relied upon. There might be a very populous town, consisting of a mass of mean houses, inhabited by poor people. With numbers, therefore, the government took property, ascertained by the amount of assessed taxes; and upon the combination of these two elements the franchise was based. The calculations necessary to determine the standard were worked out by lieutenant Drummond, afterwards under-secretary for Ireland. Upon the information obtained by the government as to the

* Roebuck, vol. ii., p. 236.

limits of each borough, its population, and the amount of assessed taxes it paid, he made out a series of a hundred boroughs, beginning with the lowest, and taking the number of houses, and the amount of their assessed taxes together, as the basis of their relative importance. Thus Schedule A was framed. In the original bill, this schedule contained sixty boroughs; in the present bill, it contained only fifty-six. The consequence of taking Mr. Drummond's report as a basis of disfranchisement was, that some boroughs, which formerly escaped as populous and large, were now placed in Schedule A; while others, which were better towns, were taken out of that schedule and

Schedule B, one to Chatham, one to the county of Monmouth, and the rest to the large towns, which, by the former bill, obtained power to return one member only. The new bill retained the £10 qualification. Every man who occupied a house of the value of £10 a-year was to have a vote, provided he was rated for the poor. It was not the rating, however, that determined the value; it did not matter to what amount he was rated, if only at £5 or £1, if the holding was really worth £10 a-year.

The second reading was moved on the 14th by lord Althorp, the chancellor of the exchequer. Lord Portchester moved that the bill be read a second time that day



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placed in Schedule B, which now contained only thirty instead of forty boroughs, as in the former bill. The diminution in this schedule, consisting of boroughs whose members were to be reduced from two to one, was owing to the fact that the government had given up the point about reducing the number of members in the house of commons, which was to remain as before, 658. Thus a number of small boroughs escaped which ought to have but one member each—so small, that every one of them ought to have been in Schedule A, that their members might be given to new, prosperous, and progressive communities. Twenty-three members were now to be distributed. Ten were given to the largest towns placed in the original

six months. His motion was supported by Sir Edward Sugden. Sir Robert Peel had taunted the government with inconsistency in adopting alterations, every one of which they had resisted when proposed by the opposition. Mr. Macaulay retaliated with powerful effect, with respect to the conduct of the tories on the question of catholic emancipation. The right honourable baronet, while declaring his willingness to grant a measure of well-considered and safe reform, expressed his determination to oppose this revolutionary bill to the last. But to those who intended to yield finally he gave this advice:—"If it be intended to give way, yield while you can have the credit of graceful concession, and do not let it be supposed

that you have been compelled to grant whatever you ultimately give."

On a division, the numbers were, for the second reading, 324; against it, 162—majority, 162. The house of commons having thus carried the reform measure a third time by an increased majority, which was now two to one, the house was adjourned to the 17th of January, when it resumed its sittings. On the 19th of that month, the Irish reform bill was brought in by Mr. Stanley, and the Scotch bill by the lord advocate. On the 20th the house resolved itself into a committee on the English bill, and continued to discuss it daily, clause by clause, and word by word, pertinaciously and bitterly wrangling over each, till the 10th of March, when the committee reported. The third reading was moved on the 19th, when the last, and not the least violent, of the debates took place. The bill was passed on the 23rd by a majority of 116, the numbers being 355 and 239. In winding up the debate, lord John Russell said:—"With respect to the expectations of the government in proposing this measure, they had not acted lightly, but after much consideration, which had induced them to think a year ago that a measure of this kind was necessary, if they meant to stand between the abuses which they wished to correct and the convulsions which they desired to avoid. He was convinced that if parliament should refuse to entertain a measure of this nature, they would place in collision the party which on the one hand opposed all reform, and on the other desired a reform extending to universal suffrage. The consequence of this would be that much blood would be shed in the struggle between the parties; and he was perfectly persuaded that the British constitution would perish in the conflict."

The bill having passed, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the reformers, lord John Russell and lord Althorp were ordered to carry in to the lords, and "to request the concurrence of their lordships in the same." They did so on Monday, the 26th, followed by a large number of members. It was read by the lords the first time, and the debate on the second reading commenced on the 9th of April. On that day the duke of Buckingham gave notice that—in the event of the bill being rejected, a result which he fully anticipated—he would bring in a reform bill, of which the principal provisions would be to give members to large and important towns, to unite and consolidate certain boroughs, and to extend the elective franchise. Lord Grey then rose to move the second reading of the reform bill. The principle of the bill, he remarked, was now universally conceded. It was admitted in the duke of Buckingham's motion. Even the duke of Wellington did not declare against all reform. They differed with the opposition then only as to the extent to which reform should be carried. He adverted to the modifications that had been made in the bill, and to the unmistakable determination of the people. At this moment the public mind was tranquil, clamour had ceased—all was anxious suspense and silent expectation. Lord Grey disclaimed any wish to intimidate their lordships, but he cautioned them not to misapprehend the awful silence of the people. "Though the people are silent," he said, "they are looking at our proceedings this night no less intently than they

have looked ever since the question was first agitated. I know it is pretended by many that the nation has no confidence in the peers, because there is an opinion out of doors that the interests of the aristocracy are separated from those of the people. On the part of this house, however, I disclaim all such separation of interests; and therefore I am willing to believe that the silence of which I have spoken is the fruit of a latent hope still existing in their bosoms."

Lord Ellenborough attacked the measure with great violence, and moved that the bill be read a second time that day six months. The debate was opened next day by lord Shrewsbury, premier earl of England, and hereditary lord high steward of Ireland—one of the peers that catholic emancipation had introduced to the house. He startled their lordships by his denunciation of the constitution in church and state. He was at a loss to know for what reason they were so enamoured of it, or from what evils it had saved the country; not from expensive wars, or an enormous national debt, or from rebellion and revolution, or frequent commercial embarrassments. Let them see if they could make it better by reforming it, and giving it fair play. Let them right the people, or the people would right themselves. They would deliver themselves from the rule of a dominant oligarchy, against which the exasperated nation had at length risen. This oligarchy, he said, had found willing coadjutors on the episcopal bench. But if the clergy know their own interest—and it is generally supposed they are not unskilled in matters of personal concern—they ought to feel the necessity of now coming forward to do their duty to the country. Hitherto they have shown themselves too often the greatest enemies of the people; willing agents of the worst system of tyranny; ready abettors of, and participators in, the vilest acts of extravagance, spoliation, and corruption. Now is the time for them to make some compensation to the people for long years of contumely and wrong. He would not mince matters. If the house of commons needed reform, so did the house of peers.

Lord Limerick, lord Mansfield, and the duke of Wellington vehemently opposed the bill. The duke was severe upon the "waverers," lords Wharnccliffe and Harrowby, who defended themselves on the ground that the bill must be carried, if not by the consent of the opposition, against their will, by a creation of peers that would swamp them. The earl of Winchelsea, on the third day, expressed unbounded indignation at the proposed peer-making. If such a measure were adopted, he would no longer sit in the house thus insulted and outraged; but would bide his time till the return of those good days which would enable him to vindicate the insulted laws of his country, by bringing an unconstitutional minister before the bar of his peers. The duke of Buckingham would prefer cholera to the pestilence with which this bill would contaminate the constitution. This day the bill found two defenders on the episcopal bench, the bishops of London and Llandaff. The bishop of Exeter, in the course of the debate, made remarks which called forth a powerful and scathing oration from lord Durham. Referring to the bishop's speech, he observed: "Of that

exhibition, I shall only say, that if coarse and virulent invective, malignant and false insinuations, the grossest perversion of historical facts, decked out with all the choicest flowers of pamphleteering slang—" Here there were loud calls to order, and lord Winchilsea moved that the words be taken down. Several noble lords having spoken, Lord Durham resumed, and said the same charges had been made against him in weekly publications notorious for scurrility and indecency; and when he found them repeated there by the right reverend prelate, he determined to take the first opportunity of stating to their lordships that the language was false and scandalous. He now repeated the declaration, and paused to let any noble lord that pleased take down his words. Resuming, he said he trusted that if he had expressed himself with too much warmth, their lordships would reflect that to all the tortures of a mind afflicted by domestic loss, had been of late superadded calumnies of the basest description, calculated to wound not only his own feelings, but those of all most dear to them. He then proceeded to discuss the question of reform, which he did in the most masterly way, reviewing its history, vindicating the principles of the measure, demonstrating its necessity, and pointing out the evils that must inevitably result from its rejection. Were two hundred peers to resist the crown, the house of commons, and the people—excommunicated by the nation, isolated, solitary in the midst of multitudes, shut up in their fortified mansions, and protected by troops from the hatred of their neighbours? "Surely," he exclaimed, "there must be something in this state of things most revolting to the habits and feelings of a British peer; yet these are the most favourable circumstances which can follow the rejection of this bill."

Lords Carnarvon, Eldon, Tenterden, Lyndhurst, the bishop of Rochester, and the bishop of Gloucester, spoke strongly against the measure. The latter, referring to lord Shrewsbury's speech, declared that he rejected his imputations upon the episcopal bench with unutterable scorn. He called upon him in the face of the house to retract or make good his charges, adding, "If he refuses to accept one of these alternatives, his long line of ancestry will not save him from disgrace." He referred to history to show that, but for the resistance of the protestant bishops to the tyranny of James II., the house of Brunswick might have moved but little beyond a German principality. The bill was defended by lord Goderich, and lord Grey rose to reply at five o'clock on Friday morning. Referring to the attack of the bishop of Exeter, he said, "The right reverend prelate threw out insinuations about my ambition: let me tell him calmly that the pulses of ambition may beat as strongly under sleeves of lawn as under an ordinary habit." He concluded by referring to the proposed creation of peers, which he contended was justified by the best constitutional writers, under extraordinary circumstances, and was in accordance with the acknowledged principles of the constitution. The house at length divided at seven o'clock on the morning of the 13th, when the second reading was carried by a majority of nine; the numbers being—contents present, 128; proxies, 56—184; non-contents present, 126; proxies, 49—175. The duke of

Wellington entered an elaborate protest on the journals of the house against the bill, to which protest 73 peers attached their signatures.

The house then adjourned for the Easter holidays, till the 7th of May. The interval was one of the greatest possible public excitement. The narrowness of the majority made the reformers tremble for the fate of the bill in committee. The awful silence was now broken, and the voice of the nation was heard like peals of thunder. The political unions which had been resting on their arms, as if watching intently the movements of armies at a distance, now started to their feet, and prepared themselves for the battle. At Leeds, at Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, meetings were held, strong resolutions passed, and imperative petitions adopted. At Birmingham an aggregate meeting of the political unions of the surrounding districts was held on the 7th of May at the foot of New Hall Hill. Of this vast and formidable assembly, the northern division alone was estimated at 100,000 men, who marched with 150 banners and eleven bands of music, their processions extending over four miles. The total number of bands in attendance at the meeting was 200, and the number of banners 700. The commencement of the proceedings was announced by sound of bugle. A number of energetic and determined speeches were delivered, and a petition to the lords was adopted, imploring them not to drive to despair a high-minded, generous, and fearless people, nor to urge them on by a rejection of their claims to demands of a much more extensive nature; but rather to pass the reform bill into law, unimpaired in any of its great parts and provisions, more especially uninjured in the clauses relating to the ten-pound franchise. The council of the Birmingham Union declared its sitting permanent, and the vast organisation throughout the United Kingdom assumed an attitude of resolution and menace truly alarming.

When the peers assembled on the 7th, it became quite evident that in allowing the bill to go into committee, they were only practising a manoeuvre. In the first place they wished to prevent the creation of peers, and in the second they were resolved to mutilate the bill in committee. They were aware that they had the sympathy of the king in this plot, and that he would have been glad of their success, irritated as he was by the coercion and pressure put upon him by his ministers. The first step was taken by lord Lyndhurst, who proposed in committee to defer the consideration of the disfranchising clauses till the enfranchising clauses had been considered. "Begin," he said, "by conferring rights and privileges, by granting boons and favours, and not by depriving a portion of the community of the privileges which they at present enjoy." This ostentatious preference of boons and favours for the people, postponing disfranchisement to enfranchisement, ringing changes on the words, was a mere artifice, but it was at once seen through by the indignant people. Lord Grey and lord Brougham promptly exposed the attempted imposition; the former hoped the noble lords would not deceive themselves. He would not say that the proposal was insidious, but its object was utterly to defeat the bill. He declared that if the motion were successful, it would be:

fatal to the whole measure. It would then be necessary for him to consider what course he should take. He dreaded the effect of the house of lords opposing itself, as an insurmountable barrier, to what the people think necessary for the good government of the country. The warning of the noble earl was on this occasion disregarded. The house being in committee, proxies could not be counted, and the amendment of lord Lyndhurst was carried after an angry debate. Contents, 151; non-contents, 116; majority, 35. This division put a sudden stop to the proceedings in committee. Lord Grey at once proposed that the chairman should report progress, and asked leave to sit again on the 10th. Lord Ellenborough endeavoured to dissuade him from this course, and proceeded to give a description of the measure which he was prepared to substitute for the ministerial bill, and which he presumed to hope would be satisfactory to the country. This was a critical moment in the destiny of England, and the awful nature of the crisis seemed to be felt by all present, except those who were blinded by faction. The house adjourned, and, says Mr. Roebuck, "Anxiety, and even alarm, were to be seen on the countenances of most of those present on that occasion, whether peers or commoners. What the morrow might bring forth, no one knew; but even the most reckless thought with something like dread of the burst of popular indignation that was sure to follow the success of this party manoeuvre." Lord Grey had now but one alternative, a large creation of peers or resignation. With a majority against him in the lords so refractory, nothing could be done. All possible means of bringing them to reason had been exhausted. Accordingly, on Wednesday, the 9th of May, the resignation of the ministers, and the king's acceptance of it, was formally announced by lord Grey in the house of lords, and by lord Althorp in the house of commons. It was evidently a relief to the king to get rid of the whigs; and he knew so little of the state of public feeling, as to suppose that a modified reform measure, a mere pretence of reform, would satisfy the country. He therefore sent for lord Lyndhurst, in order to consult him, assigning the curious reason, that being now chief baron, he was removed from the vortex of politics, although he had led the opposition in their successful attack upon the ministerial measure. The first thing lord Lyndhurst did, was to wait upon the duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, to both of whom he stated the views of the king. His majesty insisted that some extensive measures of reform should be carried. "My advice to the king," said the duke, "was not to re-appoint his late ministry, nor was it to appoint myself. I did not look to any objects of ambition. I advised him to seek the assistance of other persons well qualified to fill the high situations of the state, expressing myself willing to give his majesty every assistance, whether in office or out, to enable him to resist the advice which had been given him." The premiership had been offered to Sir Robert Peel, but he peremptorily declined to take such a perilous position, declaring that "no authority nor example of any man, nor any number of men, could shake his determination not to accept office, under existing circumstances, upon such conditions." "From the 9th to the 17th of May," says Mr. Roebuck, "the nation was left in

suspense as to the result of the ministerial negotiations, and a series of intrigues then began nearly unexampled in the annals of political profligacy. The object sought was, as usual, office; and for that end a host of politicians of all parties proved themselves ready to desert every principle by which their whole political career had been hitherto regulated." The duke of Wellington said, "I should have been ashamed to show my face in the streets if I had refused to assist my sovereign in the distressing circumstances in which he was placed." He accordingly undertook to form an administration, taking the post of prime minister himself. Mr. Manners Sutton was to be leader of the house of commons, lord Lyndhurst chancellor, and Mr. Baring chancellor of the exchequer. For five days the courageous duke was engaged in a desperate effort to form a cabinet. But no sooner was it known throughout the country, than a terrific storm of popular fury burst forth, which threatened to blow down the house of peers, and sweep away the throne. The king, from being the popular idol, became suddenly an object of popular execration. The queen, who had also been a great favourite with the people, attracted a large share of the odium excited against the court. It was understood that her influence had much to do in causing the king to desert lord Grey, and to break faith with him with regard to the creation of peers. The king and queen were groaned at and hissed, and pursued with tremendous noises by the people, while passing through the town of Brentford. Dirt was hurled at the royal carriage; and if the military escort had not kept close to the windows, it is probable their majesties would have sustained personal injury. Along the road to London, the people expressed their feeling in a similar manner; and when the carriage entered the park, the mob saluted their majesties with yells and execrations of every description.

Nothing could exceed the indignation of the public at the attempt that was being made by the court, in league with an intriguing faction, to resist the national will. All classes, high and low, rich and poor, nobles and commoners, churchmen and dissenters, were roused into a state of wild excitement and fierce determination. Indignation meetings were everywhere held, and threatening resolutions passed. The house of commons was called upon to stop the supplies; placards were put up in the windows of shops expressing the determination of the inhabitants to pay no taxes. This determination was not confined to the middle classes; men of the highest rank and largest property, such as lord Milton, told the tax-gatherer not to call again. A complete and active organisation existed in London for the purpose of stimulating and directing public feeling in the provinces, and obtaining from the people vehement petitions, which poured in to both houses rapidly, especially to the house of commons. The political unions were everywhere preparing for actual insurrection. In London meetings were held by day and by night, in which the most violent language was used even by persons of property and rank. The common council of London met, and passed resolutions denouncing those who had advised the king not to create peers as enemies of their sovereign, who had put to imminent hazard the stability of the throne and the security of the country. The following resolution

was passed with acclamation:—"That under these circumstances, this court feels it to be its duty, as a necessary means of procuring for the people of this great country an efficient reform, to petition the house of commons to withhold the supplies until such a reform shall have been secured." A standing committee was appointed to watch the course of events. The feeling excited by these extraordinary proceedings proved, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the whole mercantile and trading classes in the metropolis were prepared to adopt revolutionary measures, if such were necessary, for the attainment of the reform bill. Immense numbers of persons who had hitherto considered the proceedings of the National Political Union in London too violent, were now, says the *Times* of the 11th of May, at their own solicitation, admitted members. Similar excitement prevailed throughout the provinces. Deputies from the surrounding towns went in hot haste to Birmingham, in order to concert the necessary measures in this dangerous crisis. A meeting was held, which adopted a petition, amidst tumultuous applause, containing the following passage:—"That your petitioners find it declared in the Bill of Rights that the people of England may have arms for their defence suitable to their condition as allowed by law; and your petitioners apprehend that this great right will be put in force generally, and that the whole of the people of England will think it necessary to have arms for their defence, in order that they may be prepared for any circumstances that may arise." This petition was brought up to London by delegates, whose presence next day at various public meetings in London added to the intensity of the public excitement. There was an absurd report that lord Brougham was to continue in office under the duke of Wellington. This report his brother, Mr. W. Brougham, positively contradicted, saying, "My brother will ever continue to support the cause of the people by every means within his power; and with no other cause will he identify himself. The lord chancellor is at this moment in better health than ever. He is in good fighting order, as the sham reformers will discover to their cost. He will prove a sharp thorn in their sides; he will never desert the cause of the people."

Shortly after the king arrived, on the 12th of May. Pursued to his palace gates by the multitude of his angry and insurgent subjects, he was waited upon by the duke of Wellington, who remained in conference with him about twenty minutes, and then departed amidst the most astounding yells of the populace. "A week since," said the *Sun* of that day, "only a short week since, the king was in full possession of the greatest popularity any earthly monarch could enjoy; and now behold the change!"

Among the means resorted to for the purpose of coercing the peers, was a run upon the banks. The cry was raised, "To stop the duke, go for gold!" The advice was acted upon, and in three days no less than £1,800,000 was drawn out of the bank of England in specie. The press gave audacious expression to the popular feeling. The *Times* mocked the pretensions of the duke of Wellington, "the commander-in-chief of the ultra-reformers." "There may," says the writer, "be dexterity in such conduct; there may be generalship; there may be food for incon-

tinuent exultation and chuckling at Apsley House; but it affords evidence also of mere ignoble faction—of a lust for office more sordid and execrable, of a meanness of inconsistency more humiliating and more shameful, than we had ever suspected the duke of Wellington of being capable of affixing to his own political character. As for success in such a course of imposture, it is, let us once for all warn his grace, hopeless!"

The motion of lord Lyndhurst, to postpone the disfranchising clauses of the reform bill, was carried on Monday, the 7th. On Wednesday lord Althorp formally announced the resignation of the cabinet, when lord Ebrington immediately rose, and gave notice that he would next day move a call of the house, and then an address to his majesty on the present state of public affairs. In the course of the debate which ensued, attempts were made by Mr. Baring and Sir Robert Peel, to excite sympathy for the lords, as taking a noble stand against the unconstitutional pressure upon the king for the creation of peers; but in vain. Neither the house of commons nor the country could be got to give them credit for any motives but the most selfish. They considered their obstinacy to be nothing better than the tenacity of the monopolists of power. Mr. Macaulay indignantly denounced their inconsistency in pretending that they wished to carry a measure of reform. "Why," he exclaimed, "the ink was scarcely yet dry of the protests which noble lords had entered against the reform bill. In attempting to administer the government they were so eager to grasp, they must either shamefully desert the whole of their former protestations, or go in direct opposition to the majority of this house. And even if they could succeed in overcoming the majority of this house, they would still have dangers before them from which Mr. Pitt would have shrunk, and even an earl of Strafford have hesitated to encounter. They would go forth to the contest with public opinion without arms, either offensive or defensive. In short, they would, in taking office, present a most miserable exhibition of impotent ambition, and appear as if they wished to show the world a melancholy example of little men bringing a great empire to destruction."

The influence of the crown, always powerful, was visible in the division on lord Ebrington's motion. The "ayes" were only 288 instead of the 353 that carried the third reading of the reform bill. There were evidently many defaulters; but woe to them at the next general election! Rigid scrutiny was instituted, and a black list made out of those who had deserted their constituents on this momentous question. In the meantime the most angry remonstrances came to absent members from their constituents. The motion, however, was carried by a majority of 80, large enough to constitute an insuperable barrier in the way of a tory government. Civil war seems to have been averted only by the duke's precipitate abandonment of the undertaking to form a ministry. No one can for a moment imagine that the chief members of the Grey administration ever intended to proceed to illegal extremities, but that the conduct of their friends led the reforming world to think of and prepare for armed resistance, admits of little doubt. Parliament and the country

were kept in suspense and anxiety by varying rumours about the formation of a government for several days, during which comments were freely made on the conduct of the duke of Wellington and his friends. On the one hand, it was confidently stated that the king would keep his word as to reform, which the duke had agreed to carry. On the other hand, it was denied that the duke could ever consent to tergiversation so base. On the former supposition, Mr. Macaulay said he was willing that others should have "infamy and place." But he added, "Let us have honour and reform." Sir Robert Inglis was too honest to differ from this view of the matter, and too candid to conceal his sentiments. He declared that he could not but regard such a course on the part of his leader "with the greatest pain, as one of the most fatal violations of public confidence which could be inflicted."

Mr. Baring, who represented the duke in the house of commons, seemed to regard this declaration from the high-minded member for Oxford University as fatal to the tory scheme for recovering power. They came at length to understand that the new premier would be equally unacceptable to the country, whether he appeared with a reform bill or a gagging bill. The duke at length confessed that he had failed in his attempt to form an administration; and the king had no other resource, but to submit to the humiliation of again putting himself in the hands of his late ministers. He had before him only the terrible alternative of a creation of peers or civil war. His pain was aggravated by a mortifying condition, which the chancellor insisted on imposing, in consequence, no doubt, of the vacillation or double dealing from which the cabinet had already suffered. The king must have acted in such a manner as to forfeit, in some measure, his self-respect, or he would never have submitted to give a pledge in writing to servants who dared to doubt his royal word. It is certain that they exacted from him the following document:—"The king grants permission to earl Grey, and to his chancellor, lord Brougham, to create such a number of peers as will be sufficient to insure the passing of the reform bill, first calling up peers' eldest sons. (Signed) WILLIAM R. Windsor, May 17th, 1832."

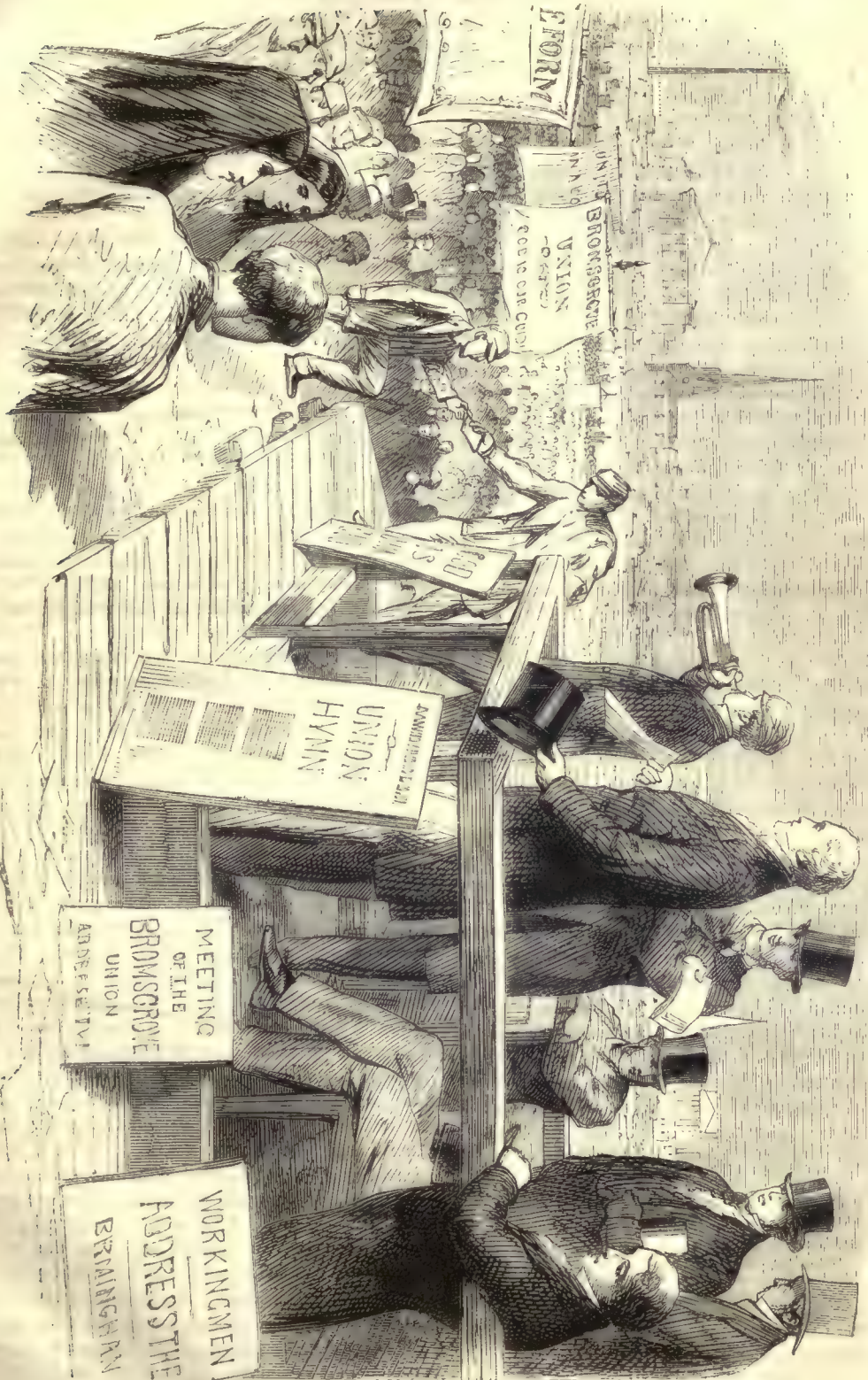
We are not surprised to learn that on this occasion the king received lord Grey and the chancellor with evident emotion, "being annoyed and angry, as well as alarmed, and his pride being hurt, by his defeat and humiliation." Contrary to custom, he allowed them to stand during the whole of the interview, his private secretary, Sir Herbert Taylor, remaining in the room. Lord Grey wondered how his learned colleague could have the heart to insist on the document, when he saw the state the king was in; but the chancellor replied that he would soon see reason to think he was right. The opposition peers were exasperated beyond measure when they heard that the premier had got authority to "swamp the house;" and one of them ventured to question the right of the crown to create peers in such numbers. But the abhorred expedient was averted by the submission of the peers themselves. To avoid the degradation threatened, of which they were privately informed by Sir H. Taylor, they consented to absent themselves from the house, and let the bill pass. The

consequence was, that on the 17th the following circular was sent to the hostile lords:—"My dear lord, I am honoured with his majesty's commands to acquaint your lordship that all difficulties to the arrangements in progress will be obviated by a declaration in the house of peers to-night from a sufficient number of peers, that in consequence of the present state of affairs, they have come to the resolution of dropping their further opposition to the reform bill, so that it may pass without delay as nearly as possible in its present shape."

After this complete surrender, the house resumed its labours in committee on the bill on the 1st of June. Few alterations were made, and the thinned ranks of the opposition ceased to throw obstacles in the way. The third reading was carried by a majority of 84, the numbers being 106 and 22. The lords' amendments having been acquiesced in by the commons, the bill was referred to the upper house, and on the 7th of June it received the royal assent by commission, the commissioners being lords Grey, Brougham, Lansdowne, Wellesley, Holland, and Durham. The king was so hurt by the coercion to which he was subjected, and by the insults heaped upon himself, the queen, and all belonging to him, that nothing could persuade him to go to the house, and give his assent in person. "The question," he said, "was one of feeling, not of duty; and as a sovereign and a gentleman, he was bound to refuse."

In reviewing this great contest, now brought to a happy termination, one thing seems extraordinary—almost unaccountable: the contrast between the conduct of the duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, in dealing with the two questions, catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform. In Ireland, they recognised in the Catholic Association the concentrated power of public opinion, the representative of tremendous physical force, which they shrunk from encountering; not that the duke of Wellington had any doubt of the result of a conflict between the army and the people in that country, but that he had a horror of civil war, and of the calamities and crimes which it entails. Sir Robert Peel fully participated with him in this feeling. Both of them were thoroughly convinced that the admission of Roman catholics into parliament—the infringement of the protestant character of the constitution—would be a departure from the principles of the highest state policy, and would be fraught with danger to our institutions. They avowed that they yielded not to principle, not to right—but to expediency; that they had to choose between two classes of evils and of dangers, and that they adopted the course which they thought would be productive of less mischief than the other. They adopted it, moreover, because they believed it was inevitable, and that they could only postpone the evil day. They openly and frankly recognised the power of the Catholic Association and of the priesthood, admitting that by that power emancipation was wrung from them.

Now what strikes the reflecting mind as very strange is, that these two eminent statesmen did not adopt the same course of reasoning, and act upon the same principle of expediency in dealing with the English people on the subject of reform. The people of England who sought to be represented in the house of commons were not what one of



THE GREAT REFORM DEMONSTRATION AT BIRMINGHAM.

their most zealous and influential opponents, lord Lyndhurst, afterwards called the Irish Roman catholics—"aliens in language, religion and blood." They were true-born Englishmen, enlightened protestants, honest patriots, who prized the institutions of their country, and were ready to die in its defence. They were loyal to the throne; and instead of wishing to overturn the constitution, they asked only to be permitted to share in its blessings, and to have it freed from iniquitous abuses. They, too, had formed political combinations of the most formidable character. The political unions were not less powerful or less determined than the Catholic Association. Men of the Saxon race are not less resolute, less self-reliant, less persevering, less earnest in the cause of justice, less sensible to the value of freedom, than the men of Celtic blood, who composed the organised masses whose shouts terrified the duke of Wellington in Ireland. They were men, moreover, who would not lend themselves to an idle agitation for the benefit of demagogues. They could not be roused into angry resistance to the government without real grievances; and when roused, and organised, and armed, and determined to act in defence of their rights against a usurping and monopolising oligarchy, all their history proved that they were not to be easily quelled or crushed. Nor did they want the element of religion to sanctify the reform movement, to elevate their views, to strengthen their purpose, and to sustain their demands by the strength of religious conviction and the power of conscience. There was therefore in the conduct of the congregated multitudes at New Hall Hill, Birmingham, in the crisis of the reform bill, a manifestation of religious feeling that ought to have deeply affected protestant and conservative statesmen, especially those who had previously succumbed to similar manifestations. When, at the sound of the bugle from the platform, those heaving masses were hushed to silence, to listen to the voice of Mr. Attwood, their chairman, the procession of the Bromsgrove Union was observed approaching in the distance. Then followed a scene which was perhaps never forgotten by any one who witnessed it. The new-comers, as they advanced, were welcomed with the singing of "The Union Hymn," then familiar even to children in every English household. It was now sung by 100,000 voices, with a pealing melody and a thrilling power which all the organs in the land could not equal. It is hard to conceive how even the boroughmongering lords could, as Englishmen, be insensible to such strains as the following, when sung by such a multitude, under circumstances which invested the whole scene with the attributes of sublimity:—

"Lo, we answer! See we come,
Quick at freedom's holy call;
We come! we come! we come! we come!
To do the glorious work of all:
And hark! we raise from sea to sea
The sacred watchword, 'Liberty!'

"God is our Guide! From field, from wave,
From plough, from anvil, and from loom,
We come our country's rights to save,
And speak a tyrant faction's doom.
And hark! we raise from sea to sea
The sacred watchword, 'Liberty!'

"God is our Guide! No swords we draw—
We kindle not war's battle-fires;
By union, justice, reason, law,
We claim the birthright of our sires.

We raise the watchword, 'Liberty!'
We will, we will, we will be free."

Immediately after the singing of this hymn, Mr. Salt addressed the great assemblage thus:—"I call upon you to repeat, with head uncovered, in the face of heaven, and the God of justice and mercy, the following words after me." In a moment every head was uncovered, and every voice uttered slowly over that wide sea of human life swelling with holy resolution, the words of the following plight:—"With unbroken faith, through every peril and privation, we here devote ourselves and our children to our country's cause."

It was against this people, thus consecrating their energies on the altar of freedom and of country, that the military were commanded to rough-whet their swords, in order, as the working classes believed at the time, that in smiting the people, they might "inflict a ragged wound." According to the "Autobiography of a Working Man,"* this is how the Scots Greys were occupied while they were shut up in the barracks at Birmingham on the Sunday after the New Hall meeting. And during the whole time that the duke of Wellington was vainly endeavouring to form a ministry, the troops were kept ready booted and spurred, with the saddles on their horses, day and night. "The doubt and dread," says the "Working Man," "were not lessened by the nature of their work. Not since before the battle of Waterloo had the swords of the Greys undergone the same process. Old soldiers spoke of it, and told the young ones. Few words were spoken. We had made more noise, and probably looked less solemn, at prayers in the morning, than we did now grinding our swords. It was the Lord's day, and we were working." Notwithstanding these precautions and formidable preparations at Birmingham, which was regarded as the chief seat of danger, it was reported and believed that the Scots Greys would not have acted against the people; so that the "cold iron" on which the enemies of popular rights relied for putting down the reformers might have failed them in the day of trial. Mr. Wellesley, member for Essex, stated that he was sorry his relative the duke of Wellington "had shown so much ignorance of the character of the British people, in supposing that they were unfit to be trusted with the liberties to which they were entitled. He had told him so often, and he was astonished that a man of such intelligent mind—a man who had led them on through blood and battle, through danger to victory—should have so mistaken the character of the British people, as to suppose that the red coat could change the character of the man, or to imagine that the soldier was not a citizen."

Fortunately the conqueror of Waterloo, whose name will be for ever associated with the glory of his country, was spared the misfortune of tarnishing his fame by turning his sword against his countrymen. But the matter of astonishment is, that he could ever have contemplated such a thing, and that while he conceded fully the claims of the Roman catholics of Ireland, in order to avoid the alternative of civil war, he refused to concede the not less legitimate and reasonable claims of the unanimous people

of England, though civil war was so imminent that the cavalry were ordered to whet their swords and saddle their horses. He offered, indeed, a small measure of reform, not the full measure that he had granted to Ireland; but Sir Robert Peel declined to follow him in this unwise experiment, though he also failed, in this great national emergency, rightly to read the signs of the times, abdicating for a time the position that he had taken, and which he afterwards happily resumed as the greatest and the safest leader in the march of social progress.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Irish Reform Bill: its Defects—The English Act seven to two better—Antagonism of Stanley and O'Connell, and its Bad Consequences—The Scotch Reform Bill—The Old System in that Country: No Man returned in Scotland for his Merits—The Property Qualification—Revolution effected by the Scotch Reform Act—General Results of the Reform Acts—Unsettled State of Ireland—Sketch of Mr. Stanley as Chief Secretary—Lord Grey's Estimate of O'Connell—Lord Cloncurry on Irish Agitation and its Causes—Disappointment as to the Results of Emancipation—The "Monster Grievance"—The Tithe System—Furious Agitation against the Establishment—A Contrast: the Pound; the Glebe—Destitution of the Clergy—Fatal Encounters with the People at Newtownbarry, Carrickschock, Castlepollard, and Gurtroe—Advances of Public Money to the Clergy—Failure of the Government as Tithe Collector—Estimate of Irish Church Property—Census of Religious Denominations—Appropriation of Church Property—Mr. Ward's Motion on the Irish Establishment—Resignation of Mr. Stanley and Sir J. Graham—Address of the Irish Bishops to the King: His Extemporaneous Speech in Reply—Defeat of Mr. Ward's Motion—The Church Temporalities Act—The Ecclesiastical Commission—Failure of the Irish Church as a National Educator—The Charter Schools—Association for discountenancing Vice, &c.—The Kildare-street Society—The National System of Education Introduced by Mr. Stanley—Scriptural Education—The Church Education Society—Parental Rights—United Education—The National School Books.

THE Irish reform bill, which had been introduced by Mr. Stanley, then Irish secretary, became the subject of debate on the 26th of May, when the second reading was moved by him in a speech of great ability. His main object was to prove that the passing of the measure would not endanger the established church in Ireland; and that it would not increase the power of O'Connell, whom, instead of conciliating, he exasperated by the contemptuous and defiant tone of his remarks. As the great question of reform had been conceded in the English bill, it was only with regard to matters of detail, and to the extent and nature of the franchise, that the tories maintained their opposition. The second reading was carried by a majority of 116, the numbers being, for the bill, 246; against it, 130. Mr. O'Connell contended that the bill was not calculated to benefit Ireland, and he said he was sure it was framed with no good feeling to the country; but, on the contrary, was dictated by narrow and bigoted feeling. He complained that certain classes of the forty-shilling freeholders were not restored by the reform bill. They had been divided into three classes: those who were proprietors in fee; those who held land for two or three lives; and those who held for a term of years, and had an annual interest of forty shillings in the holding. The last class constituted the great bulk of the voters, being the one that was multiplied by the landlords for electioneering purposes. The bill which accompanied the emancipation act not only disfranchised the fictitious voters, but also the forty-shilling freeholders in fee; against which

injustice Mr. Huskisson and Lord Palmerston solemnly protested. Mr. O'Connell now asked that this wrong should be redressed. He was supported by a moderate and greatly respected Irish statesman, the venerable Sir John Newport, who complained of defects in the measure, especially in the mode of registration, which would go far to neutralise all its benefits. Mr. O'Connell's proposal was made on the 13th of June, and was rejected by a majority of forty-nine. The Irish reform bill, instead of being the means of conciliation, tending to consolidate the union, and taking away the arguments for repeal, really furnished Mr. O'Connell with fresh fuel for agitation. His speech in the debate was one of his happiest efforts, and told with great force on the country. The Dublin corporation, then an exclusively orange body, when they heard that the duke of Wellington was summoned to the king's councils, shipped their old state coach for London, that the lord mayor and the recorder, who bore a distinguished part in the debate, might proceed in it with an address of congratulation to his majesty. The duke failed; the address was not presented; and the grand old coach was sent back to Dublin. Mr. O'Connell turned this incident to account to the great amusement of the house and of the nation, exulting over the disappointment of the Brunswickers. In a series of letters which he addressed to the reformers of England, he pointed out the defects of the Irish bill. He objected to it on the ground that it diminished the elective franchise instead of extending it; that the qualification for a voter was too high; that the registration of voters was complicated; and that the number of Irish representatives was inadequate. The substitution in counties of the ten-pound beneficial interest franchise for the forty-shilling freehold, caused the disfranchisement of 200,000 voters. Under the English reform bill there were to be nine different classes of voters, with a large augmentation of former rights. In Ireland there were but four classes:—1st, a freehold of ten pounds' clear annual value, requiring occupation; 2nd, twenty pounds' clear annual value, not requiring occupation; 3rd, leasehold of the same value, not requiring occupation; and 4th, a sub-leasehold, being a new franchise, requiring actual occupation. Thus, he said, if we take in England a single estate worth fifty pounds a-year, it could qualify no less than twenty-six persons to vote, while in Ireland, the poorer country, such a property could not possibly qualify more than three persons to vote. Hence, O'Connell argued that the English bill was seven to two better than the Irish. He referred to population to prove the unfairness towards Ireland: thus the county of Cumberland, with a population of 169,681, got two additional members, and returned four to parliament; while the county of Cork, with a population of 807,366, got no additional member, and sent only two to the reformed parliament. A similar contrast was presented between other English and Irish counties.

There was unfortunately a very unfriendly feeling between Mr. Stanley and Mr. O'Connell, from which the country suffered not a little at this period. Had a man of more conciliatory temper been chief secretary—one not too proud to consult O'Connell—the course of legislation and government would have proceeded much more smoothly

and happily. O'Connell always called Mr. Stanley a Saxon, and said that the chief secretary cared not if the Irish people were starved in this world, and damned in the next. "Observe," said Mr. Stanley, "the language he has constantly used; mark how he has borne himself towards me, a stranger in the country. In all the delicacy of conciliation, he never once called me an Englishman; but always applied to me the opprobrious epithet—as he meant it, and his audience understood it—of a Saxon. This is a specimen of the learned gentleman's conciliation."

The Irish bill was read a second time in the house of lords on the 23rd of July. It was strongly opposed by the duke of Wellington, as transferring the electoral power of the country from the protestants to the Roman catholics. Lord Plunket, in reply, said, "One fact, I think, ought to satisfy every man, not determined against conviction, of its wisdom and necessity. What will the house think when I inform them that the representatives of seventeen of those boroughs, containing a population of 170,000 souls, are nominated by precisely seventeen persons? Yet, by putting an end to this iniquitous and disgraceful system, we are, forsooth, violating the articles of the union, and overturning the protestant institutions of the country! This is ratiocination and statesman-like loftiness of vision with a vengeance! Then it seems that besides violating the union act, we are departing from the principles of the measure of 1829. I deny that. I also deny the assumption of the noble duke, that the forty-shilling freeholders were disfranchised on that occasion, merely for the purpose of maintaining the protestant interests in Ireland. The forty-shilling freeholders were disfranchised, not because they were what are called 'Popish electors,' but because they were in such indigent circumstances as precluded their exercising their suffrage right independently and as free agents—because they were an incapable constituency." The bill, after being considered in committee, where it encountered violent opposition, was passed by the lords on the 30th of July, and received the royal assent by commission on the 7th of August.

The lord advocate Jeffrey, who had introduced the Scottish reform bill as early as the 19th of January, moved the second reading on the 21st of May. He had, in the previous session, proceeded on the principle that the old system was to be regarded as utterly incurable, and not to be patched or mended, but abandoned and destroyed. They could not decimate its abuses, or cut off its vicious excesses; its essence was abuse, and there was nothing that was not vicious about it. He gloried in the avowal that no shred, or jot, or tittle of the old abomination should remain.

Indeed, it is a matter of astonishment that the Scottish people could have so long borne a state of things so humiliating to a nation which originally formed a kingdom by itself, which still retained its own laws, religion, interests, feelings, and language; which was full of generally diffused wealth; in which education had for ages been extended throughout the very lowest ranks; whose people were peaceable, steady, and provident, possessing all the qualities requisite for a safe exercise of the franchise; yet these people had literally no share whatever in the representation of the imperial parliament. The qualification for a

voter in parliament was at least thirty or forty times higher than in any other part of the empire, and above a hundred times beyond the general qualification in England. The qualification was attached to *land*, including under this term fisheries, mines, and other things that are inseparable from land, not including property in houses. But even land would not qualify a voter, unless it was held under the crown; so that a person might have an estate of £20,000 a-year which would have afforded no vote if he held it of a subject. After deductions made for persons having votes for a plurality of places, it was calculated that the total number of actual electors in Scotland did not amount to more than 2,500, or about the number of a small English county. Consequently a vote became a dear article in the Scottish market. Some persons bought votes as a good investment. The average price was about £500, but it frequently rose to double that sum. Shortly before the passing of the reform bill, six Scotch votes were exposed for sale in one day, and brought £6,000.* The electors were, therefore, cut off from the rest of the public, and set aside to exercise a high and invidious privilege, which they regarded not as a trust for the people, but as a privilege to be prized for its pecuniary value or for its influence in procuring government situations. Hence, the *Edinburgh Review*, in 1830, made the extraordinary declaration that no member had ever been returned by any body of Scotch electors, "solely in consequence of his public character or services." No man who had nothing but his public services or character to recommend him, need ever dream of a Scotch seat. Under such a system it was natural to expect, "instead of the moving of great national interests, the tactics of parliamentary parties and all that gives dignity to a real election—that there would be low manœuvring, degrading conditions, criminal understandings, paltry trucking, personal perfidy." It may then be asked how so many Scotchmen of distinguished abilities got into parliament?—men too honourable to pass through the subterranean mysteries of a Scotch election, or wanting the means to purchase votes. The answer is that such men, instead of appearing in their natural position, as representatives of their native country, were obliged to give the honour of choosing them to strangers, and were often received with acclamations by the electors of England.

While the Scotch bill was passing through committee in the commons, the English bill was being hotly contested in the lords, and absorbed so much attention that only a few members comparatively voted in the divisions upon the former measure; seldom more than one hundred, often less. There had previously been no property qualification in Scotland for members of parliament representing towns. A provision had been inserted in the bill requiring heritable property to the extent of £600 a-year for a county and £300 a-year for a borough; but this was expunged on the third reading, on the ground that if the property qualification were rigidly enforced, it would exclude some of the brightest ornaments of the house: for example, in past times, it would have excluded Pitt, Sheridan, Burke, and Tierny. The Scotch bill was passed by the lords on the 13th.

* "Edinburgh Review," October, 1830, p. 208.

of July. It increased the number of members for that country from forty-five to fifty-three, giving two each to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and one each to Paisley, Aberdeen, Perth, and Dundee; but the great change made, remarks Sir Archibald Alison, was in the class of electors, both in burghs and counties; "and this was so great as to amount to a total revolution." "The old town councils in Scotland, in great part self-elected, have been succeeded by a host of ten-pound shop-keepers and householders, actuated by different interests, and swayed by different influences. The old parchment freeholders, who followed their directing magnate to the poll in Scotland, have been succeeded by a multitude of independent feudars in villages, and tenants in rural districts."

The following is the general result of the reform acts upon the constitution of the imperial parliament:—In England the county constituencies, formerly 52, returning 94 members, were increased to 82, returning 159 members. The borough members were 341, giving a total of 500 for England. In Ireland the number of the constituencies remained the same, but five members were added, making the total number 105, representing 32 counties and 41 boroughs, including the university. A second member was given to each of the following places:—Limerick, Waterford, Belfast, Galway, and the Dublin University. The proportion of counties and boroughs in Scotland was 30 and 23, giving a total of 53. All the counties of the United Kingdom returned 253 members, all the boroughs 405, the total number constituting the house of commons being 658.

Ireland continued, during 1831 and 1832, in a very unsettled state. The restraint imposed by the Catholic Association during the emancipation struggle was relaxed when the object was attained, and when Mr. O'Connell was absent from the country, attending his parliamentary duties. The consequence was that the people, suffering destitution in some cases, and in others irritated by local grievances, gave vent to their passions in vindictive and barbarous outrages. O'Connell himself was not in a mood to exert himself much in order to produce a more submissive spirit in the peasantry, even if he had the power. He was exasperated by his collisions with Mr. Stanley, by whom he was treated in a spirit of defiance, not unmingled with scorn; so that the great agitator was determined to make him and the government he represented feel his power. If the earl of Derby had the experience when, as Mr. Stanley, he was chief secretary of Ireland, which he now possesses, he would doubtless have adopted a more diplomatic tone in parliament, and a more conciliatory spirit in his Irish administration. His character as it appeared to the Irish Roman Catholics, sketched by O'Connell, was a hideous caricature. A more moderate and discriminating Irish sketch of him represented the chief secretary as possessing a judgment of powerful penetration; with a facility in mastering details, with a temper somewhat reserved and dictatorial. Popularity was not his idol; instead of the theatrical smile and plastic posture of his predecessors, there was a knitted brow and a cold manner. He loved labour, and the impress of care and work was stamped upon his features. "For the

ordinary recreations of men, he had an austere contempt; he gave few dinners, and the freaks and foibles of fashion were sternly condemned in his careless dress. In his energetic tread across the flags of the castle-yard, and the authoritative strength of his masculine voice, self-respect and self-reliance were prominently perceptible. Amongst the gentry he acquired a reputation for eccentricity. He lived and walked alone. Sheil tells us that he has often known him to walk fifteen miles along the high road with a staff in his hand, and a slouched hat on his head, and that he was designated as the 'odd gentleman from England.'" Mr. Stanley left much undone in Ireland. But this candid catholic writer gives him credit for having accomplished much, not only in correcting what was evil, but in establishing what was good. He is praised for putting down orange processions, and for "the moral courage with which he grappled with the hydra of the church establishment." He created as well as destroyed, and "his creations were marked with peculiar efficiency." "The Irish Board of Works sprang up under his auspices. The Shannon navigation scheme at last became a reality, and the proselytism of the Kildare Peace Society received a fatal check by the establishment of the national system of education. The political philippics which baron Smith had been in the habit of enunciating from the bench were put a stop to by Mr. Stanley. He viewed the practice with indignation, and trenchantly reprobated it in the house of commons. It ought to be added that Mr. Stanley built a house in Tipperary, chiefly with the object of giving employment to the poor."* It has been often remarked that the chief secretary for Ireland, on his arrival in Dublin, is always surrounded by men, each of whom has his peculiar specific for the evils of the country. But Mr. Sheil says that Mr. Stanley, instead of listening to such counsel with the usual "sad civility, invariably intimated with some abrupt jeer, bordering on mockery, his utter disregard of the advice, and his very slender estimate of the adviser." He made an exception, however, in favour of the then celebrated "J. K. L." He acknowledged a letter from Dr. Doyle, on the education question, with warm expressions of thanks for the suggestions contained in it, and a wish to see him on his arrival in Dublin.

Towards O'Connell, however, Mr. Stanley seems to have cherished a sort of antipathy. They exercised mutual repulsion upon one another, and they never came into collision without violent irritation. Lord Grey was disposed to treat the agitator in a different spirit. Mr. O'Connell having stated publicly "that the highest offices of the law were within his power," referring to his refusal of the offer of chief baron, Lord Grey remarked in the house of lords, "I may subject myself to reproach and censure from noble lords opposite; but I have no hesitation in stating that knowing the extent of his abilities and power of rendering service to the government, I should have been very glad if it could have been done, to detach him from the course in which he is now engaged, and attach him to the service of his country." On a subsequent occasion, in April, 1832, lord Grey, in replying to a charge of wishing

* "Fitzpatrick's Life and Times of Bishop Doyle," vol. II, p. 252.

to give a bribe to O'Connell, repeated his contradiction that an offer had been made to him of a place in the government, and said that he would have been rejoiced if any attempt at conciliation on the part of the government had had the effect of inducing Mr. O'Connell to pursue a line of conduct which would have been materially conducive to the peace and tranquillity of Ireland, adding, "There is not, I am persuaded, any person who hears me, who looks at the situation of that country, and considers the weight and power of that gentleman's influence, who does not agree with me that it would have been most desirable, if practicable, to bring him over to the cause of good order."

Lord Cloncurry thus vividly sketches the agitation and its causes at this period: "From the union up to the year 1829, the type of British colonial government was the order of the day. The protestants were upheld as a superior caste, and paid in power and official emoluments for their services in the army of occupation. During the second viceroyalty of lord Anglesea, the effort was made by him to evoke the energies of the whole nation for its own regeneration. That effort was defeated by the conjoint influence of the cowardice of the English cabinet, the petulance of Mr. Stanley, and the unseasonable violence and selfishness of the lately emancipated popular leaders. Upon lord Anglesea's recall the modern whig model of statesmanship was set up and followed; popular grievances were allowed to remain unredressed; the discontent and violence engendered by those grievances were used from time to time for party purposes; the people were hung and bayoneted when their roused passions exceeded the due measure of factious requirement; and the state patronage was employed to stimulate and to reward a staff of demagogues, by whom the masses were alternately excited to madness, and betrayed, according to the necessities of the English factions. When Russells and Greys were out or in danger, there were free promises of equal laws and privileges and franchises for oppressed Ireland; the minister expectant, or trembling for his place, spoke loudly of justice and compensation, of fraternity and freedom. To these key-notes the place-hunting demagogue pitched his brawling. His talk was of pike-making, and sword-fleshing, and monster marching. The simple people were goaded into a madness, the end whereof was for them suspension of the *habeas corpus* act, the hulks, and the gallows; for their stimulators, silk gowns, and commissionerships, and seats on the bench. Under this treatment the public mind became debauched; the lower classes, forced to bear the charges of agitation, as well as to suffer its penalties, lost all faith in their social future; they saw not and looked not beyond the momentary excitement of a procession or a monster meeting. As time went on, those who led and robbed them felt the necessity of meeting the apathy attendant upon their increasing demoralisation by the use of more pungent stimulants. They could no longer trust for topics of agitation to a recapitulation of real grievances which might be redressed, but in the removal of which would be involved the drying up of the springs of the agitators' influence. To hold out hopes of the establishment of civil and religious equality, of the

attainment of complete freedom of industry, or even of local self-government, no longer sufficed to rouse the passions of the mob, or to bring money into the exchequer of the demagogues. It therefore followed, that the staple talk of the popular meetings came to be made up of appeals to the basest passions of the multitude; old feuds between Irishmen were revived, a new appetite for vengeance was whetted—nay, even the bonds of society were loosened by intimations, not obscure, that a triumph of the people would be associated with an abatement of the sacredness of the property. The emptiness of this noise was in a direct ratio with its loudness. Yet it fulfilled its purpose of frightening the tories out of office, or of deterring them from accepting it; and the talkers were accordingly every now and then rewarded and silenced by scraps from the refuse of official patronage. It must be obvious that this state of things could not have existed, had a middle class exercised a proper and natural influence upon the public mind. There was, however, practically, no such class in a position to interfere: many of those who should have belonged to it were clamorous place-beggars, in the ranks of the agitators. Those who were not sunk into that abyss of degradation were restrained by their fears from taking any part in public affairs. They were, upon the one hand, afraid of contributing to a restoration of the power of their ancient oppressors; and upon the other, distrustful of those pretended friends, whose selfish motives they could not but perceive through the disguise of their assumed patriotism." *

The Irish peasantry very soon learned that whatever emancipation had done or might do for barristers and other persons qualified to hold situations under government, from which Roman Catholics had been previously almost entirely excluded, it had done nothing to remove or even to mitigate their practical grievances. They found that the rack-rents of their holdings were not reduced; that the tax-collector went round as usual, and did not abate his demands; that the tithe-proctor did not fail in his visits, and that, in default of payment, he seized upon the cow or the pig, the pot or the blanket. Through the machinery of the Catholic Association, and the other associations which O'Connell had established, they became readers of newspapers, or regularly heard them read and had their contents expounded to them, and they learned what their own leaders had said in vehement, inflammatory language of their "monster grievance," the established church; they learned that the language of their own leaders was not more violent than what was uttered by the most eminent protestant statesmen, foreign travellers, and public writers upon this great anomaly. They were told that "the 500,000 Lutherans in that island had an establishment which cost little less than the establishment of 9,000,000 of Lutherans in England;" that while England had only twenty-six bishops, Ireland had twenty-two. They had heard of the picture presented by Mr. Wakefield, who thus addressed his readers:—"Place yourselves in the situation of a half-famished cottier, surrounded by

* "Personal Recollections of Lord Cloncurry," chap. xviii., p. 456.

a wretched family, clamorous for food; and judge what his feelings must be when he sees the tenth part of the produce of his potato garden exposed at harvest time to public 'cant;' or if, as is most common, he has given a promissory note for the payment of a certain sum of money to compensate for such tithes when it becomes due, to hear the heart-rending cries of his offspring, clinging round him, and lamenting for the milk of which they are deprived by the cows being driven to the pound to be sold to discharge the debt. I have seen the cow, the favourite cow, driven away, accompanied by the sighs, the tears, and the imprecations of a whole family, who were paddling through

murdered both proctors and collectors, wreaking their vengeance with every mark of the most savage barbarity.* They had been told by Mr. Wakefield—on the impartiality, accuracy, and general excellence of whose great work no eulogium can be too high—that the word "papist" carried as much contempt along with it, as if a beast were designated by the term; that the protestants regarded them as the helots of the country, who ought to be kept in perpetual bondage. They were told of the experience of lord chancellor Redesdale, who stated in the house of lords that he had been connected with that ill-fated country for the last twenty years; and he was sorry to say that there existed



MR. STANLEY (AFTERWARDS EARL OF DERBY).

wet and dirt, to take their last affectionate farewell of their only friend and benefactor at the pound-gate. I have heard, with emotions I can scarcely describe, deep curses repeated from village to village as the cavalcade proceeded; I have beheld at night houses in flames, and for a moment supposed myself in a country exposed to the ravages of war, and suffering from the incursions of an enemy. On the following morning the most alarming accounts of thrashers and whiteboys have met my ears—of men who had assembled with weapons of destruction, for the purpose of compelling people to swear not to submit to the payment of tithes. I have been informed of these oppressed people having, in the ebullition of their rage,

in it two sorts of justice, the one for the rich and the other for the poor, and both equally ill-administered. They had read the following description of the tithe-proctor by their country's most eminent protestant statesman, Henry Grattan:—"The use of the tithe-farmer is to get from the parishioners what the parson would be ashamed to demand, and so enable the parson to absent himself from his duty; the powers of the tithe-farmer are summary laws and ecclesiastical courts; his livelihood is extortion; his rank in society is generally the lowest; and his occupation is to pounce on the poor in the name of the Lord! He is a

* Wakefield's "Account of Ireland," vol. II., p. 436.

species of wolf left by the shepherd to take care of the flock in his absence." They had read that a single tithe-proctor had on one occasion processed 1,100 persons for tithes, nearly all of the lower order of farmers or peasants, the expense of each process being about eight shillings. They had heard of opinions delivered in parliament, on the platform, and from the press by protestant statesmen of the highest consideration, that it was a cruel oppression to extort in that manner from the majority of the tillers of the soil the tenth of its produce, in order to support the clergy of another church, who, in many cases, had no flocks, or only a few followers, who were well able to pay for their own religious instruction. The system would be intolerable even were the state clergy the pastors of the majority; but as the proportion between the protestants and the Roman catholics was in many parts as one to ten, and in some as one to twenty, the injustice necessarily involved in the mode of levying the impost was aggravated a hundred-fold. It would be scarcely possible to devise any mode of levying an impost more exasperating, which came home to the bosoms of men with more irritating, humiliating, and maddening power, and which violated more recklessly men's natural sense of justice. If a plan were devised for the purpose of driving men into insurrection, nothing could be more effectual than the tithe-proctor system. Besides, it tended directly to the impoverishment of the country, retarding agricultural improvement and limiting production. If a man kept all his land in pasture, he escaped the impost; but the moment he tilled it, he was subjected to a tax of ten per cent. on the gross produce. The valuation being made by the tithe-proctor—a man whose interest it was to defraud both the tenant and the parson—the consequence was, that the gentry and the large farmers, to a great extent, evaded the tax, and left the small occupiers to bear nearly the whole burden; they even avoided mowing their meadows in some cases, because then they should pay tithe for the hay.

There was besides a tax called church cess, levied by protestants in vestry meetings upon Roman catholics for cleaning the church, ringing the bell, washing the minister's surplice, purchasing bread and wine for the communion, and paying the salary of the parish clerk. This tax was felt to be a direct and flagrant violation of the rights of conscience, and of the principles of the British constitution; and against it there was a determined opposition, which manifested itself in tumultuous and violent assemblages at the parish churches all over the country on Easter Monday, when the rector or his curate, as chairman of the meeting, came into angry collision with flocks who disowned him, and denounced him as a tyrant, a persecutor, and a robber.

The evil of this state of things became so aggravated that all reasonable men on both sides felt it must be put a stop to somehow. In 1831 the organised resistance to the collection of tithes became so effective and so terrible that they were not paid, except where a composition had been made, and agreements had been adopted. The terrified proctors gave up their dangerous occupation after some of their number had been victimised in the most barbarous manner; and although a portion of the clergy insisted on their rights, not merely for the sake of their incomes, but

for the interest of the church which they felt bound to defend, yet many had too much Christian spirit, too much regard for the interests of the gospel, to persist in the collection of tithes at such a fearful cost. Nothing could be more violent than the contrasts presented at this time in the social life of Ireland. On the one side, there was a rapid succession of atrocities and tragedies fearful to contemplate:—the bailiffs, constabulary, and military driving away cattle, sheep, pigs, and geese to be sold by public auction, to pay the minister who had no congregation to whom he could preach the gospel; the cattle-prisons or "pounds" surrounded by high walls, but uncovered, wet and dirty, crowded with all sorts of animals, cold and starved, and uttering doleful sounds; the driving away of the animals in the night from one farm to another to avoid seizures; the auctions without bidders, in the midst of groaning and jeering multitudes; the slaughter of policemen, and in some instances of clergymen, with fiendish expressions of hatred and yells of triumph; the mingling of fierce passions with the strongest natural affections; the exultation in murder as if it were a glorious deed of war; the Roman catholic press and platform almost justifying those deeds of outrage and blood; the mass of the Roman catholic population sustaining this insurrection against the law with their support, and sympathy, and prayers, as if it were a holy war in which the victims were martyrs. On the other side were presented pictures which excited the deepest interest of the protestant community throughout the United Kingdom. We behold the clergyman and his family in the glebe house, lately the abode of plenty, comfort, and elegance, a model of domestic happiness and gentlemanly life; but the income of the rector fell off, till he was bereft of nearly all his means. In order to procure the necessaries of life for his family, he was obliged to part with the cows that gave milk for his household; the horse and car, which were necessary in the remote place where his glebe house was situated; and everything that could be spared, till at length he was obliged to make his greatest sacrifice, and to send his books—the dear and valued companions of his life—to Dublin, to be sold by auction. His boys could no longer be respectably clad, his wife and daughters were obliged to part with their jewellery and all their superfluities. There was no longer wine or medicine, that the mother was accustomed to dispense kindly and liberally to the poor around her, in their sickness and sorrow, without distinction of creed. The glebe, which once presented an aspect of so much comfort, and ease, and affluence, now looked bare, and desolate, and void of life: but for the contributions of Christian friends at a distance, many of those once happy little centres of Christian civilisation—those well-springs of consolation to the afflicted—those green spots in the moral desert—must have been abandoned to the overwhelming sand of desolation swept upon it by the hurricane of the anti-tithe agitation. During this desperate struggle force was employed on several occasions with fatal effect. At Newtownbarry, in the county of Wexford, some cattle were impounded by a tithe-proctor. The peasantry assembled in large numbers to rescue them, when they came into collision with the yeomanry, who fired, killing twelve persons. It was market day, and a

placard to the following effect had been posted upon the walls:—"There will be an end of church plunder; your pot, blanket, and pig will not hereafter be sold by auction to support in luxury, idleness, and ease persons who endeavour to make it appear that it is essential to the peace and prosperity of the country and your eternal salvation, while the most of you are starving. Attend to an auction of your neighbours' cattle." At Carrickschock there was a fearful tragedy. A number of writs against defaulters were issued by the court of exchequer, and entrusted to the care of process-servers, who, guarded by a strong body of police, proceeded on their mission with secrecy and dispatch. Bonfires along the surrounding hills, however, and shrill whistles soon convinced them that the people were not unprepared for their visitors. But the yeomanry pushed boldly on; suddenly an immense assemblage of peasantry, armed with scythes and pitchforks, poured down upon them. A terrible hand-to-hand struggle ensued, and in the course of a few moments eighteen of the police, including the commanding officer, were slaughtered. The remainder consulted safety and fled, marking the course of their retreat by the blood that trickled from their wounds. A coroner's jury pronounced this deed of death as "wilful murder" against some persons unknown. A large government reward was offered, but it failed to produce a single conviction. At Castlepollard, in Westmeath, on the occasion of an attempted rescue, the chief constable was knocked down. The police fired, and nine or ten persons were killed. One of the most lamentable of these conflicts occurred at Gurtroe, near Rathcormac, in the county of Cork. Archdeacon Ryder brought a number of the military to recover the tithes of a farm belonging to a widow named Ryan. The assembled people resisted, the military were ordered to fire, eight persons were killed and thirteen wounded; and among the killed was the widow's son.

These disorders appealed with irresistible force to the government and the legislature to put an end to a system fraught with so much evil, and threatening the utter disruption of society in Ireland. In the first place something must be done to meet the wants of the destitute clergy and their families. Accordingly, Mr. Stanley brought in a bill in May, 1832, authorising the lord lieutenant of Ireland to advance £60,000 as a fund for the payment of the clergy, who were unable to collect their tithes for the year 1831. This measure was designed to meet the present necessity, and was only a preliminary to the promised settlement of the tithe question. It was therefore passed quickly through both houses, and became law on the 1st of June. But the money thus advanced was not placed on the consolidated fund. The government took upon itself the collection of the arrears of tithes for that one year. It was a maxim with Mr. Stanley that the people should be made to respect the law; that they should not be allowed to trample upon it with impunity. The odious task thus assumed produced a state of unparalleled excitement. The people were driven to frenzy, instead of being frightened by the chief secretary becoming tithe-collector general, and the army being employed in its collection. They knew that the king's speech had recommended

the settlement of the tithe question. They had heard of the evidence of bishop Doyle and other champions, exposing what they believed to be the iniquity of the tithe system. They had seen the condemnation of it in the testimony of the protestant archbishop of Dublin, who declared his conviction that it could not be collected except at the point of the bayonet, and by keeping up a chronic war between the government and the Roman catholic people. They had been told that parliamentary committees had recommended the complete extinction of tithes, and their commutation into a rent-charge. Their own leaders had everywhere resolved, "That it was a glaring wrong to compel an impoverished catholic people to support in pampered luxury the richest clergy in the world—a clergy from whom the catholics do not experience even the return of common gratitude—a clergy who, in times past, opposed to the last the political freedom of the Irish people, and at the present day are opposed to reform, and a liberal scheme of education for their countrymen. The ministers of the God of charity should not, by misapplication of all the tithes to their own private uses, thus deprive the poor of their patrimony; nor should ministers of peace adhere with such desperate tenacity to a system fraught with dissension, hatred, and ill-will." The first proceeding of the government to recover the tithes under the act of the 1st of June was, therefore, the signal for general war. Bonfires blazed upon the hills, the rallying sounds of horns were heard along the valleys, and the mustering tread of thousands upon the roads, hurrying to the scene of a seizure or an auction. It was a bloody campaign; there was considerable loss of life, and the church and the government thus became more obnoxious to the people than ever. Mr. Stanley being the commander-in-chief on one side, and Mr. O'Connell on the other, the contest was embittered by their personal antipathies. It was found that the amount of the arrears for the year 1831 was £104,285, and that the whole amount which the government was able to levy, after putting forth its strength in every possible way, was £12,000, the cost of collection being £15,000, so that the government was not able to raise as much money as would pay the expenses of the campaign. This was how Mr. Stanley illustrated his favourite sentiment that the people should be made to respect the law. But the liberal party among the protestants fully sympathised with the anti-tithe recusants.

Of course, the government did not persevere in prosecutions from which no parties but the lawyers reaped any advantage; consequently, all processes under the existing law were abandoned. It was found that, after paying to the clergy the arrears of 1831 and 1832, and what would be due in 1833, about a million sterling would be required, and this sum was provided by an issue of exchequer bills. The reimbursement of the advance was to be effected by a land-tax. Together with these temporary arrangements to meet the exigency of the case, for the payment of the clergy and the pacification of Ireland, an act was passed to render tithe composition in Ireland compulsory and permanent. But Ireland was not yet pacified, and at the opening of the session for 1833, the royal speech recommended that parliament should take into their con-

sideration measures for a final adjustment of tithes in Ireland. The duke of Wellington took occasion to state in the debate on the address that that most deserving class of men, the Irish clergy, were in as wretched a state as ever. And in the house of commons, Mr. Littleton, the new chief secretary who succeeded Mr. Stanley, deplored the failure of all legislative efforts to make the tithe system work well in Ireland. The statute-book, he said, had been loaded with enactments by the legislatures of both countries, for the purpose of giving the proprietors of tithes effectual means to enforce the law. The whole of those enactments had proved ineffectual; many of them, of the most severe description, extending even to capital punishment, had proved utterly useless. The difficulty of collecting tithes was, indeed, rendered quite insuperable by the minute subdivision of tilled land, which was alone liable. It was stated "that a return of the actual number of defaulters, whose debts were under a farthing, and rose by farthings up to a shilling, would exhibit a very large proportion of the gross number. In some instances the charge upon the land amounted to only seven-eighths of a farthing. When he informed the committee that many of the smaller sums were payable by three or four persons, some idea might be formed of the difficulty of collecting tithes in Ireland. The highest aggregate charge was against those who owed individually about twopence; and he would then beg to remind the committee that it was not so much the sum as the situation of the individual, that rendered these charges oppressive. Twopence to one might be as great an impost as £2 to another. There was another great severity connected with the question of tithes. They were not simple. One proprietor alone did not come to the poor man to demand his tithes; but many, whose interests were irreconcilable and adverse, fastened upon him. There were different kinds of tithes—the vicarial, rectorial, and inappropriate—all often fastening on the same individual, who was bound to meet the separate demands of each tithe-owner. The opposition to tithes, then, though it might receive an impulse from agitation, was not to be wholly traced to that source. There was a deeper source in the severity of the impost itself."

It appears from a parliamentary return* that, at the lowest calculation, the land belonging to the Irish sees is as follows:—

Sees.	No. of Irish Acres
Derry	94,886
Armagh	63,470
Kilmore	51,350
Dublin	28,781
Meath	18,374
Ossory	13,391
Tuam	49,281
Elphin	31,017
Clogher	32,817
Cork and Ross	22,755
Cashel	12,800
Killalee	11,081
Tithes	£555,000
Ministers' Money	10,300
	£565,300

* February 11th, 1824.

The incomes of the parochial clergy in Ireland were subject to some deductions, as payments towards diocesan and parochial schools, repairs of certain parts of churches, and repairs of glebe-houses. Diocesan schools ought to be maintained by annual contributions from the bishop and the beneficed clergy; but the levy drawn from this source was little more than nominal. The parochial schools were supposed to be maintained by an annual stipend from the incumbent, which was estimated by custom at £2 per annum; in many cases this had not been paid. The first-fruits have been abolished. They were designed to be the amount of the first year's income of every benefice, which was to be employed in the building and repairing of churches and glebe-houses, and the purchase of glebe-land; but the assessment was made on the value of benefices in the reigns of Henry VIII., Elizabeth, and James I., and yielded only a trifling sum.

It may be well to anticipate a little here, in order to state the result of a special census of the Irish population which was taken in 1834, with the object of ascertaining the religious persuasions of the people, when it was found that the total population of 7,954,760 was divided among the several denominations as follows:—

	Proportion per Cent
Roman Catholics	80·9
Established Church	10·7
Presbyterians	8·4
Other Dissenters	2

In the appendix to the first report of the commissioners of public instruction, issued in 1834, it was stated that of the 1,387 benefices in Ireland, there were 41 which did not contain any protestants; 20 where there were less than or not more than 5; in 23 the number was under 10; in 31 under 15; in 23 under 20; and in 27 benefices, the number of protestants was not above 25. There were 425 benefices in which the number of protestants was below 100. There were 157 benefices in which the incumbent was non-resident, and no service was performed. The number of parishes or ecclesiastical districts was 2,408, and of this number 2,351 possess a provision for the cure of souls; but the total number of benefices was only 1,387, as before mentioned, of which 908 were single parishes, and 479 were unions of two or more parishes. Parishes were permanently united by act of parliament, by act of council, or by prescription, and they might be temporarily united by the authority of the bishop of the diocese. Latterly, perpetual curates, a new order in the Irish church, had been appointed to a portion of a parish specially allotted to them, the tithe of which they received, and were not subject to the incumbent of the remaining portion of the parish, but held their situations for life.

Such was the state of things in Ireland when the government of lord Grey undertook the work of church reform. There was a great deal of discussion in parliament and throughout the country on what was termed "the appropriation clause," which formed a part of the first bill introduced on the subject. Dr. Doyle had laboured hard to prove that tithes were originally designed, not only to support the clergy, but to feed and educate the poor; and that there should be for these objects a tripartite

division of the Irish tithes. Many protestants, who did not go that length, contended that the income of the Irish clergy was excessive, and that the surplus should be devoted to the support of schools; but the great point of difference on which the cabinet ultimately split was this: whether the property of the church should be devoted to any other than strictly church purposes—whether any portion of the ecclesiastical revenues could be lawfully secularised. In the first Church Temporalities Bill there was a clause affirming the principle that the surplus ought to be devoted to other purposes, to which Mr. Stanley, Sir James Graham, the duke of Richmond, and others, strenuously objected, and it was withdrawn.

When Mr. Stanley was transferred from the office of Irish chief secretary to the colonial office, Sir John Cam Hobhouse was appointed to succeed him. But he resigned the post before he had any opportunity of leaving his mark in Ireland. The post was then taken by Mr. Littleton, and on him devolved the task of introducing the Irish Tithe Adjustment Bill. When the bill was in committee on the 30th of July, Mr. O'Connell moved an amendment, to the effect that the tithes should be made payable by the landlords to the clergy after being reduced 40 per cent. This amendment was carried—the numbers being, for the motion, 82; against it, 33. The ministers determined, notwithstanding, to go on with the bill, and brought it up to the house of lords. There, on the motion of lord Ellenborough, it was thrown out by a majority of 67; two archbishops and nineteen bishops voting against it, and only three—Derry, Chichester, and Norwich—in its favour. The religious census of 1834 strengthened the party which favoured the appropriation of surplused church revenues. Lord Althorpe, who was now one of the most influential members of the government, and the leader of the house of commons, in introducing the Irish Church Temporalities Bill, avowed his conviction that any surplus funds resulting from the state management of ecclesiastical revenues should be devoted to state purposes. On the 27th of May Mr. Ward brought forward a motion upon this subject. In an able speech he reviewed the state of Ireland, and remarked that, since 1819, it had been necessary to maintain there an army of 22,000 men, at a cost of a million sterling per annum, exclusive of a police force that cost £300,000 a-year. All this enormous expense and trouble in governing Ireland he ascribed to the existence of a religious establishment hostile to the majority of the people; he therefore moved that “the protestant episcopal establishment in Ireland exceeds the spiritual wants of the protestant population; and that, it being the right of the state to regulate the distribution of church property in such a manner as parliament may determine, it is the opinion of this house that the temporal possessions of the church of Ireland, as now established by law, ought to be reduced.”

The motion was seconded by Mr. Grote. When he had concluded, lord Althorpe rose and moved that the house should be adjourned until the 2nd of June. The differences in the cabinet had now reached their crisis. It was fully expected that Mr. Ward's motion would be carried, and ministers differed as to whether the principle involved in it should be rejected or accepted; the majority

were for accepting it, whereupon Mr. Stanley, Sir James Graham, lord Ripon, and the duke of Richmond resigned their offices. They were succeeded by Mr. Spring Rice, as colonial secretary; lord Auckland, as first lord of the admiralty; the earl of Carlisle, as lord privy seal; Mr. Abercrombie, as master of the Mint. Mr. Poulet Thompson became president of the board of trade, and the marquis of Conyngham postmaster-general.

On the following day, which was the anniversary of the king's birthday, the Irish prelates, headed by the archbishop of Armagh, presented an address to his majesty, complaining of the attacks on the Irish church, deprecating the threatened innovations, and imploring his protection. The king was greatly moved by this appeal. Breaking through the usual restraints, he delivered an extemporaneous answer, in which, among other things, he said, “I now remember you have a right to require of me to be resolute in defence of the church.” He assured the bishops that their rights should be preserved unimpaired, and that if the inferior arrangements of the Irish church required any amendment—which, however, he greatly doubted—he hoped it would be left to the bishops to correct them, without the interference of other parties. He was now completing his 69th year, and he must prepare to leave the world with a conscience clear in regard to the maintenance of the church. Tears ran down his cheeks while, in conclusion, he said, “I have spoken more strongly than usual, because of the unhappy circumstances that have forced themselves upon the observation of all. The threats of those who are the enemies of the church make it the more necessary for those who feel their duty to that church to speak out. The words which you hear from me are, indeed, spoken by my mouth, but they flow from my heart.”

These words, indiscreet as they were, and calculated to embarrass the ministers, were regarded as in the highest degree precious by the bishops and clergy, and the whole tory party. With the utmost dispatch, they were circulated far and wide, with the design of bringing public feeling to bear against Mr. Ward's motion. In the meantime, great efforts were made by the government to be able to evade the motion. Its position at this time appeared far from enviable, and there was a general impression that it could not long survive. The new appointments did not give satisfaction. The cabinet was said to be only patched up in order to wear through the session. Lord Grey—aged, worn, and out of spirits—was chagrined at not being able to have lord Durham in the cabinet. Lord Althorpe was great in agriculture, and in his good-humoured manner, he was accustomed to say that he wondered why people forced him to become a cabinet minister. Lord Lansdowne had not energy enough, while the lord chancellor had perhaps too much. On the whole, the cabinet wanted unity and confidence in itself, and it was now made evident to all the world that it wanted the support of the sovereign as well as of the house of peers. It was under these discouraging circumstances that lord Althorpe had to meet Mr. Ward's motion on Monday, the 2nd of June. In order to avoid a dissolution and a general election, the results of which might turn upon the existence of the Irish church, it was neces-

sary that Mr. Ward's motion should be defeated. He refused to withdraw it, because he apprehended the speedy dissolution of the ministry, and he wished the decision of the house of commons on the Irish church question to be recorded, that it might stand in the way of a less liberal administration. The anticipated contest in the commons that evening excited extraordinary interest. The house was surrounded by a crowd anxious to obtain admittance or to hear the result, while within it was so thronged with members that the ministers found it difficult to get to their seats. Rarely has there been so full a house, the number of members being 516. When Mr. Ward had spoken in favour of his motion, lord Althorp rose to reply. He announced that a special commission of inquiry had been already issued, composed of laymen, who were to visit every parish in Ireland, and were to report on the means of religious instruction for the people; and that, pending this inquiry, he saw no necessity for the house being called upon to affirm the principles of Mr. Ward's motion. He would, therefore, content himself by moving the previous question. This was carried by an overwhelming majority, the numbers being 396 to 120. The Church Temporalities Bill, with some alterations, passed the lower house; it encountered strong opposition in the lords, but it ultimately passed, on the 30th of July, by a majority of fifty-four, several peers having recorded their protests against it, among whom the duke of Cumberland was conspicuous. The commissioners appointed under the bill were the lord primate, the archbishop of Dublin, the lord chancellor and chief justice of Ireland, and four of the bishops. Since that time three laymen have been added.

The following are the principal features of this great measure of church reform.* Church cess was to be immediately abolished. This was a direct pecuniary relief to the amount of about £80,000 per annum, which had been levied in the most vexatious manner—a reduction of the number of archbishops and bishops prospectively, from four archbishops and eighteen bishops to two archbishops and ten bishops; the revenues of the suppressed sees to be appropriated to the general church purposes.

The archbishoprics of Cashel and Tuam were reduced to bishoprics, ten sees were abolished, the duties connected with them being transferred to other sees—Dromore to Down, Raphoe to Derry, Clogher to Armagh, Elphin to Killmore, Killala to Tuam, Clonfer to Killaloe, Cork to Cloyne, Waterford to Cashel, Ferns to Ossory, Kildare to Dublin. The whole of Ireland was divided into two provinces by a line drawn from the north of Dublin county to the south of Galway bay, and the bishoprics were reduced to ten. The revenues of the suppressed bishoprics, together with those of suspended dignities and benefices, and disappropriated tithes, were vested by the Church Temporalities Act in the board of ecclesiastical commissioners, to be applied by them to the erection and repairs of churches to the providing for the church expenses which had been hitherto defrayed by vestry rates, and to other ecclesiastical purposes. The sales already made of per-

petuities of church estates, vested in the ecclesiastical commissioners, have produced upwards of £631,353; the value of the whole perpetuities, if sold, is estimated at £1,200,000. The total receipts of the ecclesiastical commissioners in 1834 were £68,729; in 1835, they amounted to £168,027; and in 1836 they reached £181,045. The cost of the official establishment was at one time £15,000; during the last ten years it has been generally under £6,000. Its total receipts, up to July, 1861, were £3,310,999. The Church Temporalities Act imposed a tax on all benefices and dignities whose net annual value exceeds £300, graduated, according to their amount, from two and a-half to five per cent., the rate of charge increasing by 2s. 6d. per cent. on every additional £10 above £405. All benefices exceeding £1,195 are taxed at the rate of fifteen per cent. The yearly tax imposed on all bishoprics is graduated as follows:—Where the yearly value shall not exceed £4,000, five per cent.; not exceeding £6,000 seven per cent.; not exceeding £8,000, ten per cent.; and not exceeding £10,000, twelve per cent. In lieu of tax, the archbishopric of Armagh is to pay to the ecclesiastical commissioners an annual sum of £4,500, and the see of Derry is to pay £6,160. The present net incomes of the Irish bishops are as follows:—Armagh, £14,634; Meath, £3,764; Derry, £6,022; Down, £3,658; Kilmore, £5,248; Tuam, £3,898; Dublin, £7,636; Ossory, £3,874; Cashel, £4,691; Cork, £2,310; Killaloe, £3,310; Limerick, £3,987;—total, £63,038. The total amount of tithe rent charged payable to ecclesiastical persons—bishops, deans, chapters, incumbents of benefices, and the ecclesiastical commissioners—is £401,114. The rental of Ireland is estimated, by the valuers under the poor law act, at about £12,000,000—this rental being about a third part of the estimated value of the annual produce of the land.*

Mr. Stanley left behind him one enduring monument of his administration in Ireland which, though still a subject of controversy and of party strife, has conferred immense advantages upon the country—the national system of education. Sir Archibald Alison remarks that the principle of the Irish establishment was that of a "missionary church;" that it was never based on the principle of being called for by the present wants of the population; that what it looked to was their *future* spiritual necessities. It was founded on the same reasons which prompt the building of churches in a densely peopled locality, the running of roads through an uncultivated district, of drains through a desert morass. "The principle," he adds, "was philanthropic, and often, in its application, wise;" but it proceeded on one postulate, which, unfortunately, was here wanting—viz., *that the people will embrace the faith intended for them*. This was so far from having hitherto been the case that the reverse was the fact. For nearly three centuries this experiment was tried with respect to the education of the rising generations of the Roman catholics, and in every age it was attended by failures the most marked and disastrous. The commissioners of national education refer to this uniformity of failure in their sixth report, in which they observe,—

* The Church Temporalities Act, 3 and 4 William IV., cap. 37.

* "Thom's Irish Almanack for 1863," p. 721.



THE IRISH ANTI-TITHING AGITATION - THE AFFAY AT CARRICKSHOCK.

DEERSON

"For nearly the whole of the last century the government of Ireland laboured to promote protestant education, and tolerated no other. Large grants of public money were voted for having children educated in the protestant faith, while it was made a transportable offence in a Roman catholic (and if the party returned, high treason) to act as a schoolmaster, or assistant to a schoolmaster, or even as a tutor in a private family. The acts passed for this purpose continued in force from 1709 to 1782. They were then repealed, but parliament continued to vote money for the support of only the schools conducted on principles which were regarded by the great body of the Roman catholics as exclusively protestant until the present system was established."

In the report drawn up by Mr. Wyse, the chairman of the select committee of the house of commons, appointed to inquire into the foundation schools in Ireland, in 1837, an interesting history is published of the origin, progress, and working of those obnoxious schools, and of other educational societies which followed. The Incorporated Society for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland was established by royal charter in 1733, the avowed object being the education of the poor in the principles of the established church. It is sufficient to remark that the annual grants which were made to the schools in connection with it (well known as the charter schools), were, in consequence of the report of the commissioners of 1824, gradually reduced, and finally withdrawn. In 1824, there were of those schools, 32; the number of children in them amounted to 2,255. The grant for 1825 was £21,615. The grant was gradually reduced to £5,750 in 1832, when it was finally withdrawn. During nineteen years this system cost the country £1,612,138, of which £1,027,715 consisted of parliamentary grants. The total number of children apprenticed from the beginning till the end of 1824, were only 12,745; and of these but a small number received the portion of £5 each, allotted to those who served out their apprenticeship, and married protestants. The Association for Discourteasing Vice was incorporated in 1800. It requires that the masters and mistresses in its schools shall be of the established church; that the Scriptures shall be read by all who have attained sufficient proficiency; and that no catechism be taught except that of the established church. The schools of the association amounted in 1824 to 226, and the number of children to 12,769; of whom it was stated that 7,803 were protestants, and 4,804 were Roman catholics; but the Rev. William Lee, who had inspected 104 of these schools in 1819 and 1820, stated before the commissioners of 1824, that he had found the catechism of the church of Rome in many of them. The Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor was founded upon the 2nd of December, 1811, and was managed by a committee of various religious persuasions. The principles which they had prescribed to themselves for their conduct, were to promote the establishment and assist in the support of schools in which the appointment of governors and teachers, and the admission of scholars, should be uninfluenced by religious distinctions, and in which the Bible or Testament, without note or comment, should be read by all the scholars who had

attained a suitable proficiency in reading, excluding catechisms and books of religious controversy; wishing it at the same time distinctly to be understood, that the Bible or Testament should not be used as a school book from which children should be taught to spell or read. A grant was accordingly made to the society of £6,980, Irish currency, in the session of 1814-15. The system of this society was manifestly the same as that which was formerly called the Lancasterian system in England, and which, although adopted by the great body of the protestant dissenters there, was so much opposed by the bishops and clergy of the established church in general, that they completely prevented its application to schools for children of their communion. The Roman catholic prelates and clergy set themselves with equal resolution against it in Ireland, and with equal success. It was accordingly found in 1824, that of 400,348 children whose parents paid for their education in the general schools of the country, and whose religion was ascertained, there were 81,060 protestants, and 319,288 Roman catholics; while of 56,201 children educated under the Kildare Place Society—although theirs were schools for the poor, and the Roman catholics bear a much greater proportion to protestants in the poorer classes than in the higher—there were 26,237 protestants, and only 29,964 Roman catholics.

Various inquiries had been instituted from time to time by royal commissions and parliamentary committees into the state of education in Ireland. One commission, appointed in 1806, laboured for six years, and published fourteen reports. It included the primate, two bishops, the provost of Trinity College, and Mr. R. Lovell Edgeworth. They recommended a system in which the children of all denominations should be educated together, without interfering with the peculiar tenets of any; and that there should be a board of commissioners, with extensive powers, to carry out the plan. Subsequent commissions and committees adopted the same principle of united secular education, particularly a select committee of the house of commons appointed in 1824. These important reports prepared the way for Mr. Stanley's plan, which he announced in the house of commons on the 9th of September, 1831. His speech on that occasion showed that he had thoroughly mastered the difficult question which he undertook to elucidate. It was remarkable for the clearness of its statements, the power of its arguments, and for the eloquence with which it enforced sound and comprehensive principles.

Mr. Spring Rice having moved that a sum of £30,000 be granted for enabling the lord-lieutenant of Ireland to assist in the education of the people, and the house having agreed to the motion without a division, Mr. Stanley, in the following month, wrote a letter to the duke of Leinster, in which he explained "the plan of national education," which has since borne his name.

The first commissioners were the duke of Leinster, archbishop Whately, archbishop Murray, the Rev. Dr. Sadlier, Rev. James Carlile (presbyterian), A. R. Blake (chief remembrancer, a Roman catholic), and Robert Holmes, a unitarian barrister. Mr. Carlile, minister of Mary's Abbey congregation, in Dublin, was the only paid

commissioner, and to him, during seven years, was committed a principal share in working the system. He selected the Scripture lessons, directed the compilation of the school books, aided in obtaining the recognition of parental rights, apart from clerical authority; in arranging the machinery, and putting it in working order.

Mr. Stanley's letter to the duke of Leinster has always been regarded as the charter of the system. Its main principles are laid down in the following passages from that letter:—

"For the success of the undertaking, much must depend on the character of the individuals who compose the board; and upon the security thereby afforded to the country, that while the interests of religion are not overlooked, the most scrupulous care should be taken not to interfere with the peculiar tenets of any description of Christian pupils. To attain the first object, it appears essential that the board should be composed of men of high personal character, including individuals of exalted station in the church; to attain the latter, that it should consist of persons holding different religious opinions. It is the intention of the government that the board should exercise a complete control over the various schools which may be erected under its auspices, or which having been already established, may hereafter place themselves under its management, and submit to its regulations. Subject to these, applications for aid will be admissible from Christians of all denominations; *but as one of the main objects must be to unite in one system children of different creeds*, and as much must depend upon the co-operation of resident clergy, the board will, probably, look with peculiar favour upon applications proceeding from—1st. The protestant and Roman catholic clergy of the parish; or 2nd. One of the clergymen and a certain number of the parishioners professing the opposite creed; or 3rd. Parishioners of both denominations. They will exercise the most entire control over all books to be used in the schools, whether in the combined moral and literary, or separate religious instruction; none to be employed in the first except under the sanction of the board, nor in the latter but with the approbation of those members of the board who are of the same religious persuasion with those for whose use they are intended. Although it is not designed to exclude from the list of books for the combined instruction such portions of sacred history or of religious or moral teaching as may be approved of by the board, it is to be understood that this is by no means intended to convey a perfect and sufficient religious education, or to supersede the necessity of separate religious instruction on the day set apart for that purpose."

Much opposition was excited by the part of Mr. Stanley's letter which spoke of "encouraging" the clergy to give religious instruction, and requiring the attendance of the scholars at their respective places of worship on Sunday to be registered by the schoolmaster. This was unwarrantably treading on religious ground, and committing both protestants and catholics to the actual support of what they mutually deemed false. But the government were driven to this course by the cry of "infidelity" and "atheism," which the new plan en-

countered as soon as it was proposed in parliament. Explanations were afterwards issued by authority, showing that the "encouragement" of religious instruction meant only granting "facility of access" to the children out of school hours, not "employing or remunerating" the teachers. The commissioners very properly treated the Bible as a book for religious instruction; but so far from offering the sacred volume an "indignity," or "forbidding" its use, they say: "To the religious instructors of the children they cheerfully leave, in communicating instruction, the use of the sacred volume itself, as containing those doctrines and precepts a knowledge of which must lie at the foundation of all true religion."

To obviate every cavil, however, as far as possible, without departing from the fundamental principle of the board, it was arranged that the Bible might be read at any hour of the day, provided the time was distinctly specified, so that there should be no suspicion of a desire to take advantage of the presence of Roman catholics. This satisfied the Presbyterians, who have nearly all placed their schools in connection with the board. But the great body of the established clergy continued, and still continue, hostile, having put forth the Church Education Society as a rival candidate for parliamentary recognition and support. Its committee declare that the national system is "essentially defective" in permitting the catholic children to refuse the Bible. They say this permission "involves a practical indignity to the Word of God," and that it is "carrying into effect the discipline of the church of Rome, in restricting the use of the inspired writings." This is the grand charge against the board, the vital point in the controversy.

The principle which has been embodied in the Irish national system received the decided approval of the ablest of the Irish Roman catholic prelates, Dr. Doyle, who, in his evidence before a parliamentary committee in 1830, thus expressed his opinion:—"I do not see how any man, wishing well to the public peace, and who looks to Ireland as his country, can think that that peace can ever be permanently established, or the prosperity of the country ever well secured, if children are separated at the commencement of life on account of their religious opinions. I do not know any measure which would prepare the way for a better feeling in Ireland than uniting children at an early age, and bringing them up in the same school, leading them to commune with one another, and to form those little intimacies and friendships which often subsist through life. Children thus united know and love each other, as children brought up together always will; and to separate them is, I think, to destroy some of the finest feelings in the hearts of men."*

The purpose and tendency of the national system are well described by the Right Hon. Alexander M'Donnell, who has been for many years the resident commissioner. He says:—"I think that the first and greatest object of the national system was the sound education of the poor of Ireland of all denominations, free from all suspicion of proselytism, affording at the same time every facility that

* Evidence before the Lords' Committee, 1854.

could reasonably be given for the separate religious education of the children attending the schools. Then the second great object was the united education of protestants and Roman catholics in the same schools; a very important object of course, but quite subordinate to the great object of all, which was a sound education for the poor of Ireland, free from the suspicion of proselytism.

"Our books are used throughout all the national schools; I believe that every one of the 5,000 national schools, without exception, employs our books; and that of itself forms, I conceive, a united education of the very best kind. I conceive that there is going on in all parts of Ireland a united system of education, even where protestants are exclusively educated in one set of national schools, and Roman catholics are educated exclusively in other national schools. I believe that the fact that the schools are all governed by the same body of commissioners, and that all trained teachers, Roman catholic and protestant, are trained together in the same training schools; that there is one system of government applicable to all the schools, and that the same books are read in every one of the 5,000 national schools; I believe that all this creates in itself a truly united education. I think that really united education is carried on in every school under the board, inasmuch as the children of the one faith or the other may attend any one of our 5,000 schools with a perfect good conscience and security. Whether they actually attend the schools or not, the school must be carried on in such a way as to render it perfectly safe for either protestant or Roman catholic to attend it."*

CHAPTER XIII.

The English Poor Laws—A Social Contrast—The Poor Law Commission of Inquiry—Demoralisation of the Working Classes—The Elizabethan Poor Law—Limitations of the Right to Relief—Workhouses—The Law of Settlement—Duties of an Overseer under the Old System—Efforts to keep down the Population—War against Cottages—"Nests of Beggar's Brats"—Depopulation of the Country—The Allowance System—Its Disorganising Effects—Increase of Population and of Cottages—Able-bodied Paupers—The Poor Law Amendment Act—Board of Commissioners—Formation of Unions—Boards of Guardians—Salutary Effects of the New Act.

If any one doubts the effect of economic laws and political enactments upon the social and moral condition of a people, he has only to study the history of the English poor laws, in which he will find them powerfully and palpably exhibited. In the winter of 1831-2, a very startling state of things was presented. In a period of great general prosperity, that portion of England in which the poor laws had their most extensive operation, and in which by much the largest expenditure of poor-rates had been made, was the scene of daily riot and nightly incendiarism. There were ninety-three parishes in four counties, of which the population was 113,147, and the poor-law expenditure £81,978, or fourteen shillings and fivepence per head; and there were eighty parishes in three other counties, the population of which was 105,728, and the poor-law expenditure £30,820, or five shillings and ninepence a head. In the counties in which the poor-law expenditure was large, the industry and skill of the labourers were

passing away, the connection between the master and servant had become precarious, the unmarried were defrauded of their fair earnings, and riots and incendiarism prevailed. In the counties where the expenditure was comparatively small, there was scarcely any instance of disorder; mutual attachment existed between the workman and his employer; the intelligence, skill, and good conduct of the labourers were unimpaired, or increased. This striking social contrast was only a specimen of what prevailed throughout large districts, and generally throughout the south and north of England, and it proved that either through the inherent vice of the system, or gross maladministration in the southern counties, the poor law had a most demoralising effect upon the working classes, while it was rapidly eating up the capital upon which the employment of labour depended. This fact was placed beyond question by a commission of inquiry, which was composed of individuals distinguished by their interest in the subject, and their intimate knowledge of its principles and details. Its labours were continued incessantly for two years. Witnesses most competent to give information were summoned from different parts of the country. The commissioners had before them documentary evidence of every kind calculated to throw light on the subject. They personally visited localities, and examined the actual operation of the system on the spot; and when they could not go themselves, they called to their aid assistant commissioners, some of whom extended their inquiries into Scotland, Guernsey, France, and Flanders; while they also collected a vast mass of interesting evidence from our ambassadors and diplomatic agents in different countries of Europe and America. It was upon the report of this commission of inquiry that the Act was founded for the Amendment and Better Administration of the Laws relating to the Poor in England and Wales (4 and 5 William IV., cap. 76). A more solid foundation for a legislative enactment could scarcely be found. The importance of the subject fully warranted all the expense and labour by which it was obtained.

One of the most astounding facts established by the inquiry was, the wide-spread demoralisation which had developed itself in certain districts. Home had lost its sanctity. The ties that bind parents and children were loosened, and natural affection gave place to intense selfishness, which often manifested itself in the most brutal manner. Workmen grew lazy and dishonest. Young women lost the virtue, which is not only the point of honour with their sex, but the chief support of all other virtues. Not only women of the working classes, but, in some cases, even substantial farmers' daughters, and sometimes those who were themselves the actual owners of property, had their illegitimate children as charges on the parish, regularly deducting the cost of their maintenance from their poor-rate, neither they nor their relatives feeling that to do so was any disgrace. The system must have been fearfully vicious that produced such depravation of moral feeling, and such a shocking want of self-respect. The history of our poor-law system, therefore, is full of interest and instruction, and a rapid review of it will fitly precede an account of the Amendment Act, which has

* Godkin's "History of Education in Ireland," p. 66.

already done away with most of its evils, and restored the poorer classes of society to the social and moral *status* from which they had been degraded by pernicious legislation.

The statutory provision for all who cannot support themselves had now existed for upwards of 250 years. There was no considerable increase of population in England from the period when the poor laws were first established up to the middle of the last century. Its people have been always distinguished for their industry, thrift, and forethought. No other nation has furnished such unquestionable proofs of the prevalence of a provident and independent spirit. From the year 1601, when the Act 43 Elizabeth, the foundation of the old code of poor laws, was put in force, to the commencement of the late war, there had been scarcely any increase of pauperism. In 1815, there were 925,439 individuals in England and Wales, being about one-eleventh of the then existing population, members of friendly societies, formed for the express purpose of affording protection to the members in sickness and old age, and enabling them to subsist without resorting to the parish fund. It may be asked, How was this state of things compatible with the right which the law gave to the destitute for support at the expense of the parish? The answer is, that the exercise of that right was subjected to the most powerful checks, and restricted in every possible way. In the first place, the poor could not obtain relief at the public expense, could not abandon the struggle for self-support, and cast themselves as a burden upon their neighbours without making sacrifices. Had they been relieved in their own homes, they could enjoy all their former comforts and pleasant associations as well in idleness as they did when they worked hard; and thus the great motive for exertion would be withdrawn, and others would follow the bad example, and learn to eat the bread that others earned, without shame or remorse. The demoralising effect of this mode of relief was pointed out by Sir Matthew Hale, in the middle of the seventeenth century, and to obviate the evil workhouses were erected in some of the large towns. In 1723, an act was passed to make them general, authorising the churchwardens and overseers, with the consent of the parishioners, to establish a workhouse in each parish; and it was at the same time enacted that the overseers should be entitled to refuse relief to all who did not choose to accept it in the workhouse, and to submit to all its regulations. In consequence of this act, workhouses were erected in many parishes, and they had an immediate and striking effect in reducing the number of paupers. Many who had previously received pensions from the parish, preferred depending on their own exertions rather than take up their abode in the workhouse. According to official accounts, the total sum raised by assessment under the name of poor's rate in England and Wales, during the three years ending with 1750, amounted at an average to £730,135 a year, of which £689,971 was expended on the poor, being a mere trifle more than the sum expended on them at the Revolution, and about £300,000 less than the sum supposed to have been expended at the commencement of the century. Then, as now, the lazy, profligate, and disorderly part of the community had the greatest possible aversion to the discipline,

regularity, early rising, cleanliness, and labour of a well-managed workhouse; while the honest and respectable portion of the working classes, who prized the comforts of home, would struggle on to the last, rather than relinquish them in order to seek food in the receptacle of poverty and vice. Every possible precaution should be adopted to preserve the health and improve the morals of paupers; but the able-bodied tenant of a workhouse should be made to feel that his situation is decidedly less comfortable than that of the industrious labourer who supports himself; and there should be the strongest inducements for him to quit the house, and regain his former position as soon as possible.

The workhouse test, then, operated powerfully in keeping down pauperism; but another cause came into operation still more influential, namely, the law of settlement. By the act 13 and 14 Chas. II., a legal settlement in a parish was declared to be gained by birth, or by inhabitancy, apprenticeship, or service for forty days; but within that period, any two justices were authorised, upon complaint being made to them by the churchwardens or overseers, if they thought a new entrant likely to become chargeable, to remove him, unless he either occupied a tenement of the annual value of ten pounds, or gave sufficient security that he would indemnify the parish for whatever loss it might incur on his account. And by a subsequent act, 3 William III., every new comer was obliged to give notice to the churchwarden of his arrival. This notice should be read in church after divine service, and then commenced the forty days during which objection might be made to his settlement. In case of objection, if he remained it was by sufferance, and he could be removed the moment he married, or was likely to become chargeable. A settlement might also be obtained by being hired for a year when unmarried or childless, and remaining the whole of that time in the service of one master; or being bound an apprentice to a person who had obtained a settlement. Dr. Burn has given the following graphic sketch of the duties of an overseer under these laws:—"The office of an overseer of the poor seems to be understood to be this: to keep an extraordinary watch to prevent persons coming to inhabit without certificates, and to fly to the justices to remove them; and if a man brings a certificate, then to caution the inhabitants not to let him a farm of ten pounds a-year, and to take care to keep him out of all parish offices; to warn them, if they will hire *servants*, to hire them by the month, the week, or the day, rather than by any way that can give them a settlement; or if they do hire them for a year, then to endeavour to pick a quarrel with them before the year's end, and so to get rid of them. To maintain their poor as cheaply as they possibly can, and not to lay out twopence in prospect of any future good, but only to serve the present necessity. To bargain with some sturdy person to take them by the lump, who yet is not intended to take them, but to hang over them *in terrorem*, if they shall complain to the justices for want of maintenance. To send them out into the country a begging. To bind out poor children apprentices, no matter to whom, or to what trade; but to take special care that the master live in another parish. To move heaven and earth if any dispute happen about a settlement;

and, in that particular, to invert the general rule, and stick at no expense. To pull down cottages; to *drive out as many inhabitants and admit as few as they possibly can; that is, to depopulate the parish in order to lessen the poor's rate.* To be generous, indeed, sometimes, in giving a portion with the mother of a bastard child to the reputed father, on condition that he will marry her, or with a poor widow, *always provided that the husband be settled elsewhere; or if a poor man with a large family happen to be industrious, they will charitably assist him in taking a farm in some neighbouring parish, and give him ten pounds to pay his first year's rent with, that they may thus for ever get rid of him and his progeny."*

The effect of this system was actually to depopulate many parishes. The author of a valuable pamphlet on the subject, Mr. Alcock, stated, that the gentlemen were led by this system to adopt all sorts of expedients to hinder the poor from marrying, to discharge servants in their last quarter, to evict small tenants, and pull down cottages; so that several parishes were in a manner depopulated, while England complained of a want of useful hands for agriculture, manufactories, for the land and sea service. "When the minister marries a couple," he said, "he rightly prays that they may be fruitful in the procreation of children; but most of the parishioners pray for the very contrary, and perhaps complain of him for marrying persons that, should they have a family of children, might likewise become chargeable." Arthur Young also described the operation of the law in his time, in clearing off the people, and causing universally "an open war against cottages." Gentlemen bought them up whenever they had an opportunity, and immediately levelled them with the ground, lest they should become "nests of beggar's brats." The removal of a cottage often drove the industrious labourer from a parish where he could earn fifteen shillings a week, to one where he could earn but ten. As many as thirty or forty families were sent off by removals in one day. Thus, as among the Scotch labourers of the present day, marriage was discouraged; the peasantry were cleared off the land, and increasing immorality was the necessary consequence.

But we come now to a new phase in the poor-law system, rather a complete revolution, by which the flood-gates of pauperism were opened, and all those barriers that had restrained the increase of population were swept away. The old system had been somewhat relaxed in 1782 by Mr. Gilbert's act, which, by incorporating parishes into unions, prevented grasping landlords and tenants from feeling that intense interest in the extinction of population and pauperism which they did when the sphere was limited to a single parish. But in the year 1795 the price of corn rose from 54s. to 74s., the wages continuing stationary, the distress of the poor was very great, and many of the able-bodied were obliged to become claimants for parish relief. But instead of meeting this emergency by temporary expedients and extra grants suited to the occasion, the magistrates of Berks, and some other southern counties, issued tables, showing the wages which they affirmed every labouring man ought to receive, not according to the value

of his labour to his employer, but according to the variations in the number of his family and the price of bread; and they accompanied these tables with an order, directing the parish officers to make up the deficit to the labourer, in the event of the wages paid him by his employer falling short of the tabular allowance. This was the small beginning of a gigantic evil. The practice originating in a passing emergency grew into a custom, and ultimately assumed the force of an established right, which prevailed almost universally, and was productive of an amount of evil beyond anything that could have been conceived possible. The allowance scales issued from time to time were framed on the principle that every labourer should have a gallon loaf of standard wheaten bread weekly for every member of his family, and one over. The effect of this was, that a man with six children, who got 9s. a-week wages, required nine gallon loaves, or 13s. 6d. a-week, so that he had a pension of 4s. 6d. over his wages. Another man with a wife and five children, so idle and disorderly that no one would employ him, was entitled to eight gallon loaves for their maintenance, so that he had 12s. a week to support him. The increase of allowance according to the number of children acted as a direct bounty upon marriage. The report of the committee of the house of commons on labourers' wages, printed 1824, describes the effect of this allowance system in paralysing the industry of the poor. "It is obvious," remarked the committee, "that a disinclination to work must be the consequence of so vicious a system. He whose subsistence is secure without work, and who cannot obtain more than a mere sufficiency by the hardest work, will naturally be an idle and careless labourer. Frequently the work done by four or five such labourers does not amount to what might easily be performed by a single labourer at task work. A surplus population is encouraged: men who receive but a small pittance know that they have only to marry and that pittance will be increased proportionally to the number of their children. When complaining of their allowance, they frequently say, 'We will marry, and then you must maintain us.' This system secures subsistence to all; to the idle as well as the industrious; to the profligate as well as the sober; and as far as human interests are concerned, all inducements to obtain a good character are taken away. The effects have corresponded with the cause—able-bodied men are found slovenly at their work, and dissolute in their hours of relaxation—a father is negligent of his children, the children do not think it necessary to contribute to the support of their parents—the employers and employed are engaged in personal quarrels—and the pauper always relieved is always discontented. Crime advances with increasing boldness; and the parts of the country where this system prevails are, in spite of our gaols and our laws, filled with poachers and thieves." Mr. Hodges, chairman of the West Kent quarter sessions, in his evidence before the emigration committee, said, "Formerly, working people usually stayed in service till they were twenty-five, thirty, and thirty-five years of age before they married; whereas they now married frequently under age. Formerly, these persons had saved £40 and £50 before they married, and they were never burdensome to

the parish; now, they have not saved a shilling before their marriage, and become immediately burdensome."

The farmers were not so discontented with this allowance system as might be supposed, because a great part of the burden was cast upon other shoulders. The tax was laid indiscriminately upon all fixed property; so that the occupiers of villas, shopkeepers, merchants, and others who did not employ labourers, had to pay a portion of the wages for those that did. The farmers were in this way led to encourage a system which fraudulently imposed a heavy burden upon others, and which, by degrading the labourers, and multiplying their numbers beyond the real

the gentleman already referred to, remarks:—"I cannot forbear urging again that any measure having for its object the relief of the parishes from their over population, must of necessity become perfectly useless, unless the act of parliament contains some regulations with respect to the erecting and maintaining of cottages. I am quite satisfied that the erecting of cottages has been a most serious evil throughout the country. The getting of the cottage tempts young people of seventeen and eighteen years of age, and even younger, to marry. It is notorious that almost numberless cottages have been built by persons speculating on the parish rates for their rents."



SIR ROBERT PEEL.

demand for them, must, if allowed to run its full course, have ultimately overspread the whole country with the most abject poverty and wretchedness.

There was another interest created which tended to increase the evil. In the counties of Suffolk, Sussex, Kent, and generally through all the south of England, relief was given in the shape of house accommodation, or free dwellings for the poor. The parish officers were in the habit of paying the rent of the cottages; the rent was therefore high and sure, and consequently persons who had small pieces of ground were induced to cover them with those buildings. On this subject Mr. Hodges,

The evils of this system had reached their height in the years 1831-2. That was a time when the public mind was bent upon reforms of all sorts, without waiting for the admission from the Tories that the grievances of which the nation complained were "proved abuses." The reformers were determined no longer to tolerate the state of things, in which the discontent of the labouring classes was proportioned to the money disbursed in poor rates, or in voluntary charities; in which the young were trained in idleness, ignorance, and vice—the able-bodied maintained in sluggish and sensual indolence—the aged and more respectable exposed to all the misery incident to

dwelling in such a society as that of a large workhouse, without discipline or classification, the whole body of inmates subsisting on food far exceeding, both in kind and in amount, not merely the diet of the independent labourer, but that of the majority of the persons who contributed to their support; in which a farmer paid ten shillings a-year in poor rate, and was in addition compelled to employ supernumerary labourers, not required on his farm, at a cost of from £100 to £250 a-year; in which the labourer had no need to bestir himself to seek work or to please his master, or to put a restraint upon his temper, having all a slave's security for subsistence, without the slave's liability to punishment; in which the parish paid parents for nursing their little children, and children for supporting their aged parents, thereby destroying in both parties all feelings of natural affection, and all sense of Christian duty. The government, therefore, resolved to apply a remedy. The following is a brief outline of the main features of the measure they proposed, and which was adopted by the legislature. They found the greatest evils of the old system were connected with the relief of the able-bodied; and in connection with that lay the chief difficulty of administering relief. It was, above all things, an essential condition that the situation of the pauper should not be made—really or apparently—so desirable as that of independent labourers of the lowest class; if it were, the majority of that class would have the strongest inducements to quit it, and get into the more eligible class of paupers. It was necessary, therefore, that an appeal to the parish should be a last resource—that it should be regarded as the hardest taskmaster and the worst paymaster. This principle was embodied in the Poor Law Amendment Act; and the effects which quickly followed on its operation were most marked and salutary. Able-bodied paupers were extensively converted into independent labourers, for whose employment a large fund was created by the reduction of parochial expenditure; next followed a rise in wages; then a diminution, not only of pauper marriages, but of early and imprudent marriages of all sorts; and lastly, there was a diminution of crime, with contentment among the labourers, increasing with their industry: relief of a child was made relief to the parent, and relief of a wife relief to the husband.

The commissioners recommended the appointment of a central board to control the administration of the poor laws, with such assistant commissioners as might be found requisite, the commissioners being empowered and directed to frame and enforce regulations for the government of workhouses, and as to the nature and amount of the relief to be given and the labour to be exacted; the regulations to be uniform throughout the country. The necessity of a living, central, permanent authority had been rendered obvious by the disastrous working of the old system, arising partly from the absence of such control, —an authority accumulating experience in itself, independent of local control, uninterested in favour of local abuse, and responsible to the government. A board of three commissioners was therefore appointed under the act, themselves appointing assistant commissioners, capable of receiving the powers of the commission by delegation.

The anomalous state of things with regard to districts was removed by the formation of unions.

In 1831 there were in England and Wales 56 parishes containing less than 10 persons; 14 parishes containing but from 10 to 20 persons, the largest of these, on the average, containing 5 adult males; and there were 533 parishes, containing from 20 to 50 persons, the largest of which would give 12 adult males per parish. It was absurd to expect that such parishes could supply proper machinery for the levying and collecting of rates, or for the distribution of relief. It was found that a large number of overseers could only certify their accounts by signing with a mark, attested by the justice's clerk. The size of the parishes influenced materially the amount of the poor-rate—the smallest giving the greatest cost per head. For example, the hundred absolutely largest parishes, containing a population of 3,196,064, gave 6s. 7d. per head; the hundred intermediate parishes, containing a population of 19,841, gave 15s. per head; while the hundred least parishes from which poor-rate returns were made, with a population of 1,708, £1 12s. a head. The moral effects were still more remarkable. In the large parishes, 1 in 13 was relieved; in the intermediate, 1 in 12½; and in the smallest, 1 in 4, or 25 per cent. of the population, were paupers. Hence the necessity of a union of parishes with a common workhouse and a common machinery, and with paid permanent officers for the administration of relief.

The most important change in the settlement law was the repeal of the settlement by hiring and service, which prevented the free circulation of labour, interfered with the liberty of the subject, and fixed an intolerable burden upon the parish. This law was repealed by the 64th and 65th sections of the act; the settlement by occupation of a tenement, without payment of rates, by the 66th; while other sections effected various improvements in the law of removal. The old law made it more prudent for a woman to have a number of children without a husband than with a husband, as she could throw the burden of their support upon the parish, or through the parish force the putative father to support them; and if he could not give security to pay, he was liable to imprisonment. By this means marriages were often forced—a power of which the women availed themselves to a large extent. These evils were remedied in the new act by rendering the unmarried mother liable for the maintenance of her children, by rendering it unlawful to pay to her any sums which the putative father might be compelled to contribute for the reimbursement of the parish, and by rendering it necessary that evidence additional to that of the mother should be required to corroborate her charge against the person accused of being the father.

Each union of parishes, or each parish, if large and populous enough, was placed under the management of a board of guardians, elected annually by the ratepayers; but where, under previous acts, an organisation existed similar to that of unions or boards of guardians, under the Poor Law Amendment Act these have been retained. The following table exhibits the present local divisions of England and Wales:—

AUTHORITY.	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF PARISHES.
Poor Law Amendment Act...	{ 585 unions	13,964
	{ 20 single parishes	20
Local Act (various)	{ 21 unions	320
	{ 15 single parishes	15
Gilbert's Act (22 Geo. III, c. 63)	{ 12 unions	200
	{ 2 single parishes	2
43 Elizabeth, c. 2	{ 89 parishes (including the Scilly Islands as one parish)	89
	Total.....	14,610

Of these unions and parishes 111 were declared and organised in the first year, 252 in the second, 205 in the third, and 17 in the fourth. The unions have since become districts for the administration of the act for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages. Each union is administered by a board of guardians, representing the several parishes or townlands, and meeting once a week or once a fortnight for the transaction of business. Within the four years succeeding 1834 as many as 328 unions had workhouses completed and in operation, and 141 had workhouses building or in course of alteration. The work went on slowly till the whole country was supplied with workhouse accommodation. The amount expended in providing new workhouses up to 1858 was £4,168,759, and in altering and enlarging old workhouses, £792,772; the total amount thus expended was upwards of five millions sterling. Each union is provided with the following officers: a clerk, an auditor, a chaplain, medical officer, relieving officers, master and matron of the workhouse, schoolmaster and schoolmistress. These arrangements involved a large expenditure, but it was indispensable, in order to secure an effective administration, and also economical, in view of the waste and demoralisation of the old system. The most demoralising and dangerous of all abuses, the creation and maintenance of a great mass of able-bodied pauperism, received at once a check, which has remained in full force, and is still reducing the amount of old pauperism of this kind, and preventing a new growth, which would otherwise have surely succeeded to the old. The system which demoralised employers as well as labourers, the payment of wages in whole or in part by the relief of people while in employment, was immediately stopped by the introduction of the new law. On the other hand, the converse abuse, which, in proportion as able-bodied pauperism was encouraged in any parish, caused the really impotent and destitute to be neglected, is in nearly as great a degree corrected. The improved conduct of the labourers was in the first years very striking, and the improved morality of the women, by the alteration of the bastardy law, was in the same period equally remarkable. The testimony and instances are fully displayed in the earlier reports of the commissioners, especially in their second report, and in the reports of two committees of the house of commons, in the years 1837 and 1838. Costs of litigation, and the expenditure in the removal of paupers, were gradually reduced. In 1833-4, these were £258,604; in 1834-5, £202,527; in 1835-6, £172,482; in 1836-7, £126,951; in 1837-8, £93,982; in the years 1856-7, it is returned as £59,163 14s. The act of 1834 was not passed without encountering a

formidable opposition. The carrying of the act into execution necessarily involved a most extensive interference with old habits both in the poor and rich, with private interests most widely diffused in the perpetuation of old abuses. It was never established that any one case of real hardship was encountered through the operation of the law; but, necessarily, many partial mistakes were made, and instances were not unfrequent of injudicious zeal. Cases, however, were innumerable in which loud complaints were made, and those were used successfully to influence the public mind, which had never been generally well informed on the subject. About the time when the act had got into full operation, and when it might have been expected that its full effects in the extirpation of dishonest pauperism and vagrancy, and in confining relief to its proper purposes would soon be realised, the opposition was successful in checking, and almost entirely arresting, the further progress of the measure. Still, the main provisions of the act had been brought into action: unions were formed; boards of guardians, and paid officers and auditors appointed; and all had been abundantly instructed, by the great mass of information diffused, in the dangers to be avoided and the principles to be kept in view. The result has been thus far favourable, that what was already secured in good administration has been retained, the dangers of increasing pauperism kept well at bay, and the diminution by natural causes in the numbers of paupers has not been allowed to be quite filled up by a new growth. On the whole, it may be safely concluded that pauperism is on the decrease; while, on occasions of general distress, the relief is adequately increased and adapted to circumstances, without the danger of the occasional relaxation becoming the permanent rule; and that a very intelligent body of administrators has been created, of which the community has found the benefit, in the introduction of many measures of general utility.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

Negro Emancipation—Mr. Buxton's Motion on Slavery—Mr. Canning's Resolutions—Change in Public Opinion on Slavery—Condition of the West Indian Slaves—Influence of the Missionaries—Mr. Brougham's Motion—Mr. Stanley's Plan of Negro Emancipation—Compensation to the Slave-owners—Apprenticeship—The Emancipation Act passed—Liberty proclaimed 1st of August, 1834—Provisions of the Measure—Division of the Twenty Millions—Working of the Apprenticeship System—Complete Emancipation in 1838—Economic and Social Effects of Emancipation—Results of Free and Slave Labour, a Contrast—Lord Eldon and the New Poor Law—Renewal of the Irish Coercion Act—Lord Althorp and Mr. Shell—Trades Unions—Strikes—Excitement about the Conviction of Six Dorchester Labourers—Strike of 3,000 Men at Leeds—Meeting at Copenhagen Fields—Strike of 13,000 Tailors in London—Charges against the Trades Unions—Condemned by Lord Brougham—Murder of a Manufacturer at Chester—Strike of 10,000 London Builders—Debate on Mr. O'Connell's Motion on the Repeal of the Union—Speech of Mr. Spring Rice—Ovation of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Eldon at Oxford—Disappointment of the Tories—Disensions in the Cabinet—Charge against Baron Smith—The Vote of Censure against him Rescinded—The Corn Laws—Retirement of Lord Grey: his Career and Character—Dispute between O'Connell and the Chief Secretary—Lord Melbourne Premier—Dissenting Grievances—Their Exclusion from the Ministry—The Bill for their Admission rejected—Old Bailey Jurisdiction.

THE active mind, strong will, and philanthropic spirit of

Mr. Stanley found an important field for their exercise in the colonial office. He applied his energies to the abolition of negro slavery in the West Indies, and was happily more successful in that work than in his attempt to tranquillise Ireland. The time had arrived when the labours on behalf of the negro race of Clarkson, Wilberforce, Macintosh, Brougham, Buxton, Lushington, and William Smith were to be followed with success, by the abolition of slavery in our West Indian colonies. The Society of Friends, as became that philanthropic body, led the van in the movement which commenced in 1823, when Mr. Wilberforce presented a petition from them in the house of commons. Soon after Mr. Buxton brought forward a resolution, condemning slavery as repugnant to Christianity and to the British constitution, when Mr. Canning moved counter-resolutions as an amendment, recommending reforms in the system, which, it was alleged, might be safely left to the West Indian assemblies; and if they refused to do their duty, the imperial parliament might then interfere. These resolutions were carried, although any one acquainted with the history of the West Indies might have known that they would be perfectly futile. No amelioration of the system could be rationally expected from the reckless adventurers and mercenary agents by whom many West Indian plantations were managed. The infamous cruelty of which the missionary Smith had been the victim showed that, while the colonial laws allowed the most horrible atrocities, there existed among the planters a spirit of brutality which did not shrink from their perpetration. Time was when such barbarities might have escaped with impunity; when in our own country it was maintained in high places, and even by the legislature, that slavery was defended by an impregnable fortress, that property in human flesh was not only expedient for the good of the commonwealth, and beneficial for the negro, but also a sacred institution, founded on the authority of the Bible. But, thanks to the indefatigable labours of the friends of the negro race, such abominable dogmas had been long reprobated by public opinion, and at the period now referred to no man ventured to promulgate such heresies in England. The moral sense of the nation had condemned slavery in every form. The missionaries had, in the midst of tremendous difficulties and cruel persecutions, enlightened the West Indian slaves with regard to their rights as men and their privileges as Christians; and while they inculcated patience and meek submission even to unjust laws, they animated their crushed hearts with the hope that the blessings of liberty would soon be enjoyed by them, and that humanity and justice would speedily triumph over the ruthless tyranny under which they groaned.

Ten years passed away from the adoption of Mr. Canning's resolution, and little or nothing was effectually done to mitigate the system, notwithstanding various subsequent recommendations of the British government. The consolidated slave law for the crown colonies contained in an order in council issued in 1830, was proposed for the chartered colonies as a model for their adoption; but it contained no provision for the education or religious instruction of the slaves. All the chartered colonies, except two, Grenada and Tobago, had legalised Sunday markets,

and they allowed no other time to the negroes for marketing or cultivating their provision grounds. The evidence of slaves had been made admissible; but in most of the colonies the right was so restricted as to make it entirely useless. Except in the crown colonies, the marriage of slaves was subject to all sorts of vexatious impediments. The provision against the separation of families was found everywhere inoperative. The right of acquiring property was so limited as to prove a mockery and a delusion. The order in council gave the slaves the right of redeeming themselves and their families, even against the will of their owners; but all the chartered colonies peremptorily refused any such right of self-liberation. In nearly all the colonies the master had a right by law to inflict thirty-nine lashes at one time, on any slave of any age, or of either sex, for any offence whatever, or for no offence. He could also imprison his victims in the stocks of the workhouse as long as he pleased. There was no return of punishments inflicted, and no proper record. An order in council had forbidden the flogging of females; but in all the chartered colonies the infamous practice had been continued, in defiance of the supreme government. The administration of justice—if the term be applicable to a system whose very essence was iniquity—was left to pursue its own course, without any effort for its purification. In July, 1830, Mr. Brougham brought forward his motion, that the house should resolve, at the earliest possible period in next session, to take into consideration the state of the West Indian colonies, in order to the mitigation and final abolition of slavery, and more especially in order to the amendment of the administration of justice. But the national mind was then so pre-occupied with home subjects of agitation that the house was but thinly attended, and the motion was lost by a large majority. The reform agitation absorbed public interest for the two following years, so that nothing was done to mitigate the hard lot of the suffering negro till the question was taken up by Mr. Stanley, in 1833, in compliance with the repeated and earnest entreaties of the friends of emancipation. The abolitionists, of course, had always insisted upon immediate, unconditional emancipation—the restoration of the negro to all the rights of manhood conferred upon him by the Creator, and of which he had been deprived. But the ministerial plan contained two provisions altogether at variance with their views; a term of apprenticeship, which, in the first draft of the measure, was to last twelve years, and compensation to the owners—a proposition which, though advanced with hesitation, ultimately assumed the enormous amount of twenty millions sterling. On the principle of compensation there was a general agreement, because it was the state that had created the slave property, had legalised it, and imposed upon the present owners all their liabilities. It was therefore thought to be unjust to ruin them by what would be regarded as a breach of faith on the part of the legislature. The same excuse could not be made for the system of protracted apprenticeship, which would be a continuance of slavery under another name. If the price were to be paid for emancipation, the value should be received at once. This was the feeling of lord Howick, who was then under-

secretary for the colonies, and who resigned his office rather than be a party to the apprenticeship scheme, which he vigorously opposed in the house, as did also Mr. Buxton and Mr. O'Connell. But the principle was carried against them by an overwhelming majority. Among the most prominent and efficient advocates of the negroes during the debates were Mr. Buckingham, Dr. Lushington, admiral Flemming, and Mr. T. B. Macaulay. The opposition to the government resolution was not violent; it was led by Sir Robert Peel, whose most strenuous supporters were Sir Richard Vyvian, Mr. Godson, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, and Mr. Hume. In the house of lords the resolutions were accepted without a division, being supported by the earl of Ripon, lord Suffield, earl Grey, and the lord chancellor Brougham. The speakers on the other side were the duke of Wellington, the earl of Harewood, lord Ellenborough, and lord Wynford.

In the bill which was founded on the resolutions, the term of apprenticeship was limited to six years for the plantation negroes, and four for all others. The bill passed the house of lords with slight opposition; and on the 28th of August, 1833, it received the royal assent. It does not appear that William IV. urged any plea of conscience against signing this act of emancipation, although in his early days he had been, in common with all the royal family, except the duke of Gloucester, opposed to the abolition of the slave trade. The act was to take effect on the 1st day of August, 1834, on which day slavery was to cease throughout the British colonies. All slaves who at that date should appear to be six years old and upwards were to be registered as "apprentice labourers" to those who had been their owners. All slaves who happened to be brought into the United Kingdom, and all apprentice labourers who might be brought into it with the consent of their owners, were to be absolutely free. The apprentices were divided into three classes. The first class consisted of "predial apprentice labourers," usually employed in agriculture, or the manufacture of colonial produce, on lands belonging to their owners, and these were declared to be attached to the soil. The second class, consisting of the same kind of labourers, who worked on lands not belonging to their owners, were not attached to the soil. The third class consisted of "non-predial apprenticed labourers," and embraced mechanics, artisans, domestic servants, and all slaves not included in the other two classes. The apprenticeship of the first was to terminate on the 1st of August, 1840; and of the "non-predial" on the same day in 1838. The apprentices were not obliged to labour for their employers more than forty-five hours in any one week. Voluntary discharges were permitted; but, in that case, a provision was made for the support of old and infirm apprentices. An apprentice could free himself before the expiration of the term, against the will of his master, by getting himself appraised, and paying the price. No apprentices were to be removed from the colony to which they belonged, nor from one plantation to another in the same colony, except on a certificate from a justice of the peace that the removal would not injure their health or

welfare, or separate the members of the same family. Under these conditions the apprentices were transferable with the estates to which they were attached. Their masters were bound to furnish them with food, clothing, lodging, and other necessities, according to the existing laws of the several colonies, and to allow them sufficient provision ground, and time for cultivating it, where that mode of maintenance was adopted. All children under six years of age, when the act came into operation, and all that should be born during the apprenticeship, were declared free; but if any children were found destitute, they could be apprenticed, and subjected to the same regulations as the others. The act allowed governors of colonies to appoint stipendiary magistrates, with salaries not exceeding £300 a-year, to carry the provisions of the law into effect. Corporal punishment was not absolutely abolished, but it could be inflicted only by the special justices, who were authorised to punish the apprentices by whipping, beating, imprisonment, or addition to the hours of labour. The corporal punishment of females was absolutely forbidden under all circumstances. The quantity of punishment was restricted, and the hours of additional labour imposed were not to exceed fifteen in the week.

The sum of twenty millions was divided into nineteen shares, one for each of the colonies, proportioned to the number of its registered slaves, taken in connection with the market price of slaves in that colony, on an average of eight years, ending with 1830. But no money was payable in any colony until it should have been declared by an order in council that satisfactory provision had been made by law in such colony for giving effect to the emancipation act. Two of them were so perverse as to decline for several years to qualify for the reception of the money; but others acted in a different spirit. Believing that the system of apprenticeship was impolitic, they declined to take advantage of it, and manumitted their slaves at once. Antigua was the first to adopt this wise course. Its slaves were all promptly emancipated, and their conduct fully justified the policy; for on Christmas Day, 1834, for the first time during thirty years, martial law was not proclaimed in that island. Thus, the effect of liberty was peace, quietness, and confidence. Bermuda followed this good example, as did also the smaller islands, and afterwards the large island of Barbadoes; and their emancipation was hailed by the negroes with religious services, followed by festive gatherings. Jamaica, and some other islands, endeavoured to thwart the operation of the new law, as far as possible, and took every advantage in making the apprentices miserable, and wreaking upon them their spite and malice. They met with harsher treatment than ever, being in many instances either savagely ill-used or inhumanly neglected. Considering their provocations, it was generally admitted that they behaved on the whole very well, enduring with patience and resignation the afflictions which they knew must come to an end in a few years. The total number of slaves converted into apprentices on the 1st of August, 1834, was 800,000. The apprenticeship did not last beyond the shorter time prescribed, and on the 1st of August, 1838, there was not a slave in existence under the British crown,



SCENE ON A WEST INDIAN PLANTATION—SLAVES RECEIVING THE NEWS OF THEIR EMANCIPATION.

save only in the island of Mauritius, which was soon required by instructions from the home government to carry the act into effect.

There were the gloomiest possible predictions that the act would not work satisfactorily; that the colonies would be ruined; that the negroes would abandon their occupations, and take to the bush; that the estates would lapse into a wilderness; and that we might bid adieu to West Indian sugar. There is no need to dispute the fact that the inhabitants of a tropical country are inclined to be very indolent, and that they will not work much while they can obtain the necessaries of life without working. They naturally prefer to "bask in the sun, and stem the tepid wave;" but it is, nevertheless, the fact, that with all the grumbling of the planters, and the loud complaints, espe-

of the West Indies, namely, that in 1857, the year of the severe commercial crisis, the colonial bank received bills amounting to £1,300,000, and less than £8,000 were returned. There was no failure during that year in the West Indian trade; and coffee, cotton, wool, sugar, rum, and cocoa were all exported in increased quantities. The exports of Great Britain alone, as shown by the trade and navigation accounts for 1858 to the West Indies, have averaged more than half a million over the preceding ten years. These official statistics go to prove that the West Indies are rapidly advancing in wealth and prosperity since the year of the emancipation. The general character and habits of the people are likewise improved. From two to three hundred villages have grown up by the unaided exertions of the negroes in the island of Jamaica alone,



WEST INDIAN SCENERY—VIEW IN THE ISLAND OF CUBA.

cially from Jamaica, of impending bankruptcy and ruin, the islands, on the whole, were never in so flourishing a state as they have been since the abolition of slavery. It appears from a sugar return of 1858, that in the last two complete years of slavery, viz., 1832 and 1833, the exports of sugar from the West Indies to Great Britain were 8,471,741 cwt., while the exports for the two years of 1856 and 1857 are 8,736,654 cwt. These returns are limited to Great Britain alone, no account being taken of the recent and very promising trade with Australia and the United States. Exclusive of Jamaica and the Mauritius, the remaining fifteen islands of the West Indies produced during 1855, 1856, and 1857, 7,427,618 cwt.; while the same islands produced during the last three years of slavery 7,405,849 cwt. of sugar. There is one fact which shows the sound commercial state

and upwards of 100,000 acres of land have been purchased in that island by the coloured inhabitants. In the legislative assembly of Jamaica, which counts some fifty members, are some ten or a dozen gentlemen of colour. Negroes have found their way into the police force, among the officers of the penitentiary and of the courts of justice; among the barristers, and among the magistracy. Education is gradually making way, and crime of an atrocious character is very rare in these islands. There can be but one opinion regarding the results of emancipation entertained by any man who will dispassionately investigate the condition of the coloured populations in the West Indies; and that opinion will redound, in the highest degree, to the sagacity as well as the generosity of those who then advocated the deliverance of the slave. England, by freeing her slaves, performed a

politic as well as a very just act. Men may now find practically exemplified what was frequently scouted in the heat of the debates on emancipation, that however wildly theoretical or absurdly philanthropical the position might then appear, the past twenty years have demonstrated that when a nation has courage to be just it need have no fear in the long run of its commercial prosperity.*

Let us compare this state of things with the condition of the West Indian colonies disclosed in "Statement, Calculations, and Explanations submitted to the Board of Trade, relating to the Commercial, Financial, and Political State of the British West Indian Colonies," ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on the 7th of February, 1831. In these authentic statements, it is declared that "for many years the distress of Jamaica had been accumulating, until it had reached a crisis which threatened to involve all classes in ruin. The planter was unable to raise money to provide for his family, or to feed and clothe his negroes; the mortgagee got no interest for his capital; British annuitants looked for remittances in vain; sugar did not pay the duties and the cost of cultivation; the planter's industry was requited only by accumulating debt; and they called for the interposition of the imperial parliament to save the landowners and capitalists from ruin, and the negroes from starvation." This appeal was supported by a plea that looks rather strange, coming from such a quarter. A committee, expressing the sentiments of the assemblies of Barbadoes, Antigua, the Virgin Islands, and other colonies, state: "The slaves are deprived of many comforts which they would otherwise enjoy from the prosperity of their masters. It is not to be expected that moral or religious improvement can continue to make progress in a community so situated. In such a state of affairs the consequences must be ruinous; the estates must be abandoned; civilisation, religion, and morality recede and vanish, as at Hayti, with the white population." Twenty-six of the first West India houses in England, addressing the government in May, 1830, affirmed that many of the estates had not paid their expenses for the last year, not to speak of the interest on the capital, or on the debts with which they were encumbered, or the support of the families dependent upon them. Under these circumstances, they declared that, "unless some immediate relief be afforded, despair and ruin must inevitably overwhelm the colonies and all dependent upon them, and great distress and inconvenience be sustained in the manufacturing, shipping, and other interests connected with the colonies."† It is with such piteous appeals and doleful vaticinations, that every reform is met by the supporters of rotten systems; but the results invariably falsify their predictions, and realise in the long run the most sanguine hopes of the friends of freedom and progress.

Lord Eldon, whose conservative instincts grew stronger as his mental and bodily strength decayed, greatly disliked the new poor law; but he refrained from opposing it, because it was warmly supported by the duke of Wellington and most of the lords. He declined to attend any of the discussions respecting it, considering it a wicked measure

that should be regarded by all good men with abhorrence. Writing to his daughter, he said, "Heaven grant that this new mode of treating the poor and needy may not bring forth those fruits which I for one anticipate! They are to proceed in this hazardous measure to-night, but unto their assembly mine honour shall not be united." The noble lord's last speech in parliament, delivered on the 25th of July, 1834, was an appropriate *finale* of his political life, consistent throughout in his opposition to all "dangerous innovation," in which category he appeared to include every political and social change that the wisdom of men could devise. On this occasion he voted against the bill for making the Great Western Railway, being as usual careful to state that he gave his vote on "conscientious grounds."

The vehement denunciation of the Irish Coercion Act, upon its being renewed, by some of the Irish members, provoked lord Althorp to remark that they had expressed different opinions in private, and had admitted the necessity of the measure. The noble lord was required to name an instance, and he mentioned Mr. Sheil, who contradicted the assertion in so unqualified a manner, that, on the motion of Sir Francis Burdett, both lord Althorp and Mr. Sheil were taken into custody by the serjeant-at-arms. They were released after some time, on giving assurance that they had no hostile intention. A committee of inquiry, moved for by Mr. O'Connell, subsequently brought forward a report which, by acquitting all parties of blame, gave universal satisfaction.

Much inconvenience and misery were caused during the year by the trades unions and their strikes. In several places the workmen combined in order to enforce a rise of wages, and a more equitable distribution of the profits derived from their labour. The striking commenced on the 8th of March, when the men employed by the London gas companies demanded that their wages should be increased from twenty-eight shillings to thirty-five shillings a-week, with two pots of porter daily for each man. On the refusal of this demand, they all stopped working; but before much inconvenience could be experienced, their places were supplied by workmen from the country. On the 17th of March an event occurred which caused general and violent excitement among the working classes. At the Dorchester assizes, six agricultural labourers were tried and convicted for being members of an illegal society, and administering illegal oaths, the persons initiated being admitted blindfold into a room where there was the picture of a skeleton and a skull. They were sentenced to transportation for seven years. Their case excited the greatest sympathy among the working population throughout the kingdom. In London, Birmingham, and several other large manufacturing towns, immense meetings were held to petition the king in favour of the convicts. In the midst of this excitement, the manufacturers of Leeds declared their determination not to employ any persons in their factories who were members of trades unions. The consequence was, that in that town three thousand workmen struck in one day. On the 15th of April there was a riot at Oldham, where, in consequence of the arrest of two members of a trade union, a factory was nearly destroyed, and one person killed, the mob having been dispersed by a troop of lancers. Several

* "An Inquiry into the Results of Emancipation."—*Edinburgh Review*, 1850.

† "Quarterly Review," April, 1831.

of the rioters were arrested, and sentenced to terms of imprisonment, varying from six to eighteen months. On the 21st of April a meeting of the trades union took place at Copenhagen Fields, to adopt a petition to the home secretary, praying for a remission of the sentence on the Dorchester convicts. They marched to the home office through the leading thoroughfares, numbering about 25,000, in order to back up their deputation, which, however, lord Melbourne refused to receive, though he intimated to them that their petition should be laid before the king, if presented in a proper manner. The multitude then went in procession to Kennington Common. On the 28th 13,000 London journeymen tailors struck for higher wages. The masters, instead of yielding, resolved not to employ any persons connected with trades unions, and after a few weeks the men submitted and returned to their work.

The conduct of the trades unions excited a great deal of angry feeling amongst the wealthier classes; and the government were vehemently condemned for not putting down the combination with a strong hand. It was said that the mischief they created was well known; that though their interference with trade, "their atrocious oaths, impious ceremonies, desperate tyranny, and secret assassinations had been brought under their observation," ministers could not be stirred to any exhibition of energy for the protection of the manufacturer, the workman, or the public. They were appealed to by the organs of the employers in such language as the following:—"Those whose lives and property have been endangered by these illegal associations have a right to call on government to employ some additional means for their suppression; those who wish for the prosperity of our trade, and, what is of far more importance, the prosperity and happiness of the working classes, should equally desire their extinction; those who hate oppression should give their suffrages for the putting down these most capricious and irresponsible of all despotisms. They are alike hurtful to the workmen who form them; to the capitalists who are the object of their hostility; and to the public, who more remotely feel their effects. Were we asked to give a definition of a trades union, we should say it is a society whose constitution is the worst of democracies, whose power is based on outrage, whose practice is tyranny, and whose end is self-destruction."

On the 28th of April the duke of Newcastle had brought the trades unions under the consideration of the house of lords, and questioned ministers as to their neglect respecting the disturbances these combinations occasioned. Lord Grey contented himself with a quiet expression of regret for their existence, and of a hope that they would die out if let alone. Meantime, the government were ready to put down disorderly meetings. This apparent indifference called forth indignant protests from the marquis of Londonderry and lord Eldon. The lord chancellor declared that the meetings were illegal, and that they were likely to produce great mischief; adding, "Of all the worst things, and of all the most pernicious devices that could be imagined for the injury of the interests of the working classes, as well as the interests of the country at large, nothing was half so bad as their existence." He also stated

that there could not remain the shadow of a doubt of the justice of the conviction of the Dorchester labourers. Strikes and combinations, however, continued during the summer. At the Chester assizes, on the 5th of August, two men were indicted for the murder of a manufacturer during a strike in 1831. It appeared on evidence that the deceased had excited the ill feeling of the trades unions of the place, where he had a mill, in which he gave employment to a great number of people. Two of his own workmen had agreed to assassinate him for the sum of £3 6s. 8d. each, paid by the union. They shot him as he was passing through a lane to his mills. Being found guilty, they were executed. On the 18th of the same month the workmen employed by the builders of London struck to the number of 10,000, including the artisans at the government works. This course was adopted in consequence of a combined declaration of the master-builders, requiring them to abandon their connexion with trades unions.

On the 22nd of April Mr. O'Connell brought forward a very comprehensive motion. It was for a select committee to inquire and report on the means by which the destruction of the Irish parliament was effected; on the effects of the union upon Ireland, and upon the labourers in husbandry and operatives in manufactures in England; and on the probable consequences of continuing the legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland. This motion originated a debate on the repeal question which lasted four days. Mr. O'Connell himself spoke for six hours. The debate was chiefly memorable for a speech of Mr. Spring Rice, in defence of the union, which also occupied six hours in the delivery. He concluded by proposing an amendment to the effect that an address should be presented to the king by both houses of parliament, expressing their determination to maintain the legislative union inviolate. In a very full house the amendment was carried by an overwhelming majority, the numbers being for the motion, 523; against it, 38. Mr. Spring Rice's speech served the government materially, while by the conservatives it was regarded as "a damper" to their own hopes.

The duke of Wellington was installed as chancellor of the university of Oxford on the 10th of June. The Tories in that stronghold of conservatism availed themselves of the opportunity for a great political demonstration. It appears that they had condoned the duke for his tergiversation on the Roman catholic question, in consequence of his fidelity to the Tory creed on the subject of parliamentary reform. The reception was everything that his friends could wish. Lord Londonderry, who was present, wrote to the duke of Buckingham—"Nothing could surpass the enthusiasm and intoxication of the reception. It was beyond our most sanguine expectation, even for the duke of Cumberland." Lord Eldon was also present, and shared in the ovation. "And in an extraordinary and affecting manner was their enthusiastic sympathy awakened when his grandson, lord Encomb, received his doctor's degree, and was presented by the law professor to the chancellor." Lord Eldon wrote himself that he was extremely affected by the treatment he received. "It is," he said, "quite overpowering to have met with the congratulations of multitudes here upon the re-

ception of my name in the theatre yesterday over and over again. When Encomb had his degree, the manner in which the duke of Wellington received and handed him up to me, the people calling out 'Eldon!' was affecting beyond anything I ever met." When he returned to London, he said, with exultation, "I will tell you what charmed me very much when I left the theatre, and was trying to get to my carriage: one man in the crowd shouted out, 'There is old Eldon—cheer him, for he never rattled!' I was very much delighted, for I never did rat. I will not say I have been right through life—I may have been wrong; but I will say that I have been consistent." He expressed unbounded delight when lord Stanley, Sir J. Graham, the duke of Richmond, and lord Ripon resigned, and he declared that the misrule under which the nation had been suffering for some years must now be at an end. But to his great surprise and mortification, lord Grey's government rallied from this blow, and for a little time recovered its popularity. The whig attorney-general, who on his promotion had been thrown out at Dudley on account of Irish coercion, and the ministerial support of the pension list, was in a few days after returned triumphantly for the city of Edinburgh; and the different sections of the liberal party showed a disposition to re-unite, so that lord Eldon expressed a fear that the restoration of the tories was indefinitely postponed. He always, says lord Campbell, manfully adhered to this old, respected, time-honoured name of his party, under which for near two centuries they had so gallantly defended the altar and the throne, talking rather contemptuously of the upstart appellation of "conservatives," among whom he foretold would be some of very lax notions respecting both religion and politics.*

The chiefs of the party were at this time sanguine in their expectation of being speedily called to office. Their hopes were founded mainly upon the dissensions that were known to exist in the cabinet. These dissensions were first revealed by Mr. O'Connell's motion for a committee to inquire into the conduct of baron Smith, when presiding as a judge in criminal cases, and especially with reference to a charge addressed by him to the grand jury of Dublin, in which he said: "For the last two years I have seldom lost an opportunity for making some monitory observations from the bench. When the critical and lawless situation of the country did not seem to be generally and fully understood, I sounded the tocsin and pointed out the ambushade. Subsequent events deplorably proved that I had given no false alarm. The audacity of factious leaders increased from the seeming impunity which was allowed them; the progress of that sedition which they encouraged augmented in the same proportion, till on this state of things came, at length, the coercion bill at once to arrest the mischief, and consummate the proof of its existence and extent. . . . I consider the epidemic of our day to be a turbulent abuse of the right of petition, making it a channel for the conveyance, not of humble prayer, but of refractory invective and insolent dictation. This abuse seeks to turn that which it so distorts (as was done about two centuries ago) into the means of demolition, and that which Shakspeare,

I think, called 'hurly-burly innovation.' An appetite for this latter seems the mainspring of insurrectionary movement at the present time; while those who instigate it may be turning the restless impulse to purposes more regular and systematic, and more their own. . . . I abominate the misleader, while I pity the misled."

As there was no doubt that these shafts were aimed at O'Connell, this last charge afforded him a fair opportunity of putting a stop to the abuse by bringing the conduct of the talented but eccentric judge before parliament; for, as there was no political case in the calendar, there was no excuse for the attack.

Mr. Littleton declared it impossible to refuse his consent to the motion; Mr. Stanley, lord Althorp, and lord John Russell expressed a similar view. Sir James Graham briefly but warmly dissented from his colleagues. He had come down to the house with the understanding that they meant to oppose the motion. He for one still retained his opinion, and had seen no reason to change it. As one who valued the independence of the judges and his own character, he must declare that if the motion were carried, and if, as its result, an address was presented to the crown for the removal of baron Smith, it would be a highly inexpedient—nay, more, a most unjust proceeding. The present would be the most painful vote he had ever given, since he felt it incumbent upon him to sever himself from those friends with whom during a public life of some duration he had the honour of acting; but feeling as he did the proposition to be one dangerous in itself, he conceived he would be betraying the trust committed to him if he did not declare against it.* Baron Smith was ably defended by Mr. Shaw, by Sir J. Scarlett, and Sir R. Peel. On a division, the motion for a committee of inquiry was carried by 167 to 74, Sir J. Graham and Mr. Spring Rice voting in the minority. Next morning Sir James tendered his resignation as first lord of the admiralty, which was declined, and in the following week the vote was rescinded by a majority of six.

Although the resignation of Sir James Graham was not accepted, the breach effected by his speech and vote was by no means healed. His conduct was characterised as being not only an open desertion of his colleagues, but an unnecessarily pointed condemnation of them. The contrariety of principle and feeling between the two sections of the cabinet was still further displayed in the debate raised early in March by Mr. Hume and colonel Torrens on the corn laws. The proposition brought forward by Mr. Hume was ostensibly to get rid of the sliding scale, and to substitute a ten-shilling fixed duty, to be lessened by one shilling every year till the importation of corn should be entirely free. Mr. Torrens M'Cullagh remarks that not a fourth of the lower house were then, nor for ten years after, prepared to vote for free trade in corn; and in the upper house, not half a dozen votes would have been given in its favour. The members of the cabinet voted both ways on this motion, which was negatived by a majority of 312 to 155.

We have already seen that the differences in the cabinet

* Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors," vol. xvii., p. 580.

* "Life and Times of Sir J. Graham," by Torrens M'Cullagh, vol. I., p. 467.

reached the point of separation, and led to the secession of Sir James Graham, Mr. Stanley, and the conservative section, on the occasion of Mr. Ward's motion with reference to the appropriation of the Irish church revenues. The vacant offices were then filled up. But a month only elapsed when fresh differences arose in the cabinet, leading to further resignations, and ending in the retirement of lord Grey from public life. Again Ireland was the rock on which the cabinet struck and went to pieces. The Irish Coercion Act, which had been passed for one year only, was to be renewed, with modifications, for which purpose a bill was introduced into the lords about the middle of June. A large number of the liberal members of England and Scotland, as well as Ireland, required the omission of the clauses enabling the lord-lieutenant to suppress public meetings by proclamation—a power which lord Wellesley persisted in declaring he did not require, although requested by lord Grey to reconsider his opinion on that point. Lord Althorp, Mr. C. Grant, Mr. Spring Rice, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Abercrombie sided with the viceroy. But their opinions were overruled in the cabinet, and they agreed to support the bill as it stood. Lord Althorp had very reluctantly yielded the point, more especially as the necessity for the extra constitutional powers was denied by the Irish executive and by the lord chancellor. Mr. Littleton, the Irish secretary, having indiscreetly made Mr. O'Connell aware of the division in the cabinet, and of the fact that several of its members were supporting the clause contrary to their convictions, the Irish leader used the knowledge thus obtained with tremendous effect. While sitting under the fierce invectives of his opponent, lord Althorp felt his position to be intolerable. On quitting the house, after a long and harassing discussion, on the 7th of July, he wrote to the prime minister, announcing this fact. Next morning there was a conference, after which lord Grey transmitted to the king his resignation, with that of lord Althorp; and on the recommendation of lord Grey, lord Melbourne was appointed to the office of prime minister, being succeeded in the Home Office by lord Duncannon; while lord Althorp, relieved from his obligation with regard to the Coercion Bill, consented to resume the post he had just resigned.

On the 9th of July earl Grey made a statement in the lords, when the duke of Wellington disclaimed all personal hostility in the opposition he had been obliged to give to his government. The lord chancellor pronounced an affecting eulogium on the great statesman who was finally retiring from his work, and expressed his own determination to remain in office. Lord Grey's popular administration had lasted three years, seven months, and twenty-two days, which exceeded the term of his predecessor, the duke of Wellington, by nearly a year and a half. Since 1754 only four premiers had held office for a longer period—namely, the duke of Newcastle, eight years; lord North, twelve; Mr. Pitt, upwards of seventeen; and lord Liverpool nearly fifteen years. Lord Grey, from the infirmities of age, declining health, and weariness of official life, had wished to retire at the close of the previous session, but was prevailed upon by his colleagues to remain in office. In delivering his farewell speech he was listened to with

profound attention, and at one moment was so overpowered by his feelings that he was compelled to sit down, the duke of Wellington considerably filling up the interval by presenting some petitions.

Earl Grey had lived to witness the triumphant realisation of all the great objects for which throughout his public life he had contended, sometimes almost without hope. Catholic emancipation had been yielded by his opponents as a tardy concession to the imperative demand of the nation. In the debates on that question in the house of lords, lord Grey was said to have excelled all others, and even himself. The long dormant question of parliamentary reform was quickened into life by the electric shock of the French revolution of 1830, when the duke of Wellington, with equal honesty and rashness, affirmed that the existing system of representation enjoyed the full and entire confidence of the country. This declaration raised a storm before which he was compelled to retire, in order to make way for a statesman with keener eye and firmer hand, to hold the helm and steer the vessel in that perilous crisis of the nation's destiny. Throughout the whole of that trying-time earl Grey's wisdom, his steadfastness, the moral greatness of his character, and the responsibility of his position, made him the centre of universal interest, and won for him the respect and admiration of all parties in the nation. Baffled again and again in the struggle for reform, undismayed by the most formidable opposition, not deterred or disheartened by repeated repulses, he renewed his attacks on the citadel of monopoly and corruption, till at last his efforts were crowned with victory. And well did he use the great power for good which the reformed parliament put into his hands. The emancipation of the slaves, the reform of the Irish church, and the abolition of the gigantic abuses of the poor law system, were among the legislative achievements which he effected. His foreign policy, in the able hands of lord Palmerston, was in harmony with his own domestic policy—bold, just, moderate, true to the cause of freedom abroad, while vigilantly guarding the national honour of his own country. After his retirement, lord Grey appeared occasionally in the house of lords. He died at his seat in Northumberland, on the 17th of July, 1845, in the eighty-second year of his age. Few statesmen have ever left behind a name so pure. In youth he defied obloquy, and scorned the fascinations of power for the sake of the cause of liberty and right, to which he had consecrated his life. For that cause he laboured through many years with unfaltering devotion, when most of those who loved it had relinquished their efforts in despair. In old age he took the command of the army of reformers, and fought the battle of the constitution with obstinate determination, till victory crowned his efforts. His character was like a great tree, which grew up amid storms till it attained unrivalled strength and beauty, and when cut down leaves a void which for ages cannot be filled up. Such a man can have no successor. No character can rise up between him and posterity to fill the space and obstruct the view. Throughout all ages of our history, a grateful nation will look back with admiration to lord Grey as the man who restored the temple of the British constitution upon broader and firmer foundations,

at a time when revolution had threatened it with utter demolition.

On the 17th of July the new premier, lord Melbourne, announced a less offensive coercion bill for Ireland, which led to an animated debate, in which lords Wicklow and Wharncliffe, the duke of Wellington, and other peers strongly censured the conduct of the government for its alleged inconsistency, vacillation, and tergiversation. The new coercion bill passed quickly through both houses, and became the law of the land before the end of the month.

The English dissenters were led, notwithstanding the difference in creed, to sympathise to a considerable extent with Irish catholics in their agitation against the church establishment. Church-rates were felt as a grievance, affecting the consciences as well as the purses of nonconformists. They wished to be relieved from the burden of supporting a church of whose services they could not avail themselves; and accordingly, during the session of 1834, many petitions were presented, praying for the abolition of church-rates, and for the separation of church and state, and the removal of the bishops from the house of lords. Dissenters felt particularly aggrieved by the tests which debarred them from obtaining university degrees, which, they justly contended, should be attainable as a matter of right on equal grounds by citizens of all denominations. Some of the restrictions were of comparatively modern date, and many members of the universities themselves were anxious that they should be relaxed. Thus a petition was got up at Cambridge, and signed by sixty-three resident members of the senate, which prayed for an abolition of religious tests offered to candidates for degrees in arts, law, and physic, and stating "that they were only seeking for a restitution of their ancient laws and laudable customs, since the restrictions complained of were imposed on the universities in the reign of James I., most of them in a manner informal and unprecedented, and grievously against the wishes of many members of the senate, in times of bitter party animosities, and during the prevalence of dogmas, both in church and state, which are at variance with the present spirit of the English law, and with the true principles of Christian toleration." This petition was presented by lord Grey on the 21st of March in the upper house, and by Mr. Spring Rice on the 24th in the commons; but no step was taken in consequence, till after the Easter recess, when colonel Williams moved an address to the crown, praying that the universities of Oxford and Cambridge should no longer act under the letters of James I. Mr. Wood moved an amendment to the effect that it was more advisable to proceed by bill, which was carried by a large majority; but before anything could be done, the exclusive spirit of both universities was roused to a pitch of violent excitement, and in the midst of the controversial storm, the quiet voice of reason could not be heard. A counter-petition was got up and signed by 258 members of the university of Cambridge, resident and non-resident, comprising eleven heads of houses, eight professors, and twenty-nine tutors. There was another signed by 755 under-graduates and bachelors of arts. They were both presented in the

lords by the duke of Gloucester, and in the commons by Mr. Goulburn. A similar petition was presented by Mr. Estcourt from the university of Oxford. Mr. Wood moved the second reading on the 20th of June, when Mr. Estcourt proposed that it should be read a second time that day six months. He objected to it, because it would destroy the religious part of university education, which was the essential part; because it would thus tend to dissolve the connection between the church and the state, and by necessary consequence to the destruction of the established church. Mr. Herbert seconded the amendment, and with reference to the fact that protestants are agreed in the essentials of religion, and that there might be a scheme of religious education, embracing the leading doctrines of Christianity, in which all might safely concur, he said he doubted if this were possible. "He expected no advantage from so vague a system of theology, an emasculated kind of instruction in Christianity and morals, producing no feeling of confidence or reverence in the minds of its pupils. A bill like the present would operate as a direct exclusion of the clergy from the universities, and every parish in England would feel the consequences." Mr. C. W. Wynne was convinced that the present bill was but the first of a series of measures which, if not checked in time, must lead to the subversion of the established church, and the destruction of all our institutions. Mr. Potter, Mr. Ewart, and Mr. Spring Rice dissipated all the chimeras that had been thus conjured up by the advocates of monopoly, and presented in its true light the odious principle of exclusion, according to which the dissenter was told that, however obedient he might have been to the college authorities, however high the eminence he had reached, still he would not be allowed the symbol of his attainments, because he was a dissenter. The university of Dublin was not less orthodox because dissenters could obtain its degrees, and why should the English universities be destroyed by a process which had been beneficial at the other side of the channel? Mr. Goulburn contended strenuously for religious tests as a necessary condition for obtaining a civil privilege. But Mr. Stanley could not see why a man should sign the thirty-nine articles in order to obtain a literary degree, and he deprecated the idea that such a subscription should be regarded as a mere matter of form. Sir Robert Peel was not yet prepared to carry out fully the principle of religious equality. The bill, he argued, would give to Jews, infidels, and atheists a statutable right of demanding admission into our universities. Dissenters had been freed from all civil disabilities by the repeal of the Test Acts, and the Roman catholics by the Emancipation Act; a vast change had been effected in the constitution of parliament by the Reform Act: and after all those concessions, were they now to be deprived of an established church? What was the essence of an established church? What but the legislative recognition of it on the part of the state? Parliament was therefore entitled to say to the dissenters, With that legislative recognition you shall not interfere. In a brief speech, full of sound sense, lord Althorp showed the absurdity of those arguments and apprehensions. The second reading of the bill was carried by a majority of 321 to 194. It was opposed by the

speaker in committee, but having there received some amendments, it was read a third time and passed on the 28th of July by a majority of 164 against 75. In the lords it was denounced by the duke of Gloucester, chancellor of the university of Cambridge, who moved that it be read a second time that day six months. He was followed by the duke of Wellington, chancellor of the university of Oxford. Lord Brougham ably defended the measure, but in vain. The bill was rejected by a majority of 187 against 85. An attempt made by lord Althorp to abolish church-rates, and to grant in lieu thereof the sum

by a majority of 180 against 38), for the admission of dissenters into the universities, for the prevention of bribery at elections, and for the regulation of coroners' courts. An important act was passed for the improvement of the administration of the criminal law in the metropolis. It extended the jurisdiction of the Old Bailey Court over a population which was then about 1,700,000, including parts of Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, and Essex. The Old Bailey sessions were to be held monthly, and oftener if necessary, for the transaction of the criminal business of the metropolis.



MR. HUME.

of £250,000 from the land-tax, to effect a commutation of tithes, and to allow dissenters to get married in their own chapels, was equally unsuccessful.

The performances of parliament in 1834 fell very short of what had been promised, and of what had been done in 1833. This had arisen from ministerial differences and changes, and also from the disposition of the house of peers to alter or reject measures sent to them from the reformed parliament. Among the measures rejected, or so altered that the commons could not agree to the amendments, were the bills for the removal of Jewish disabilities (thrown out

CHAPTER XXV.

Prorogation of Parliament—King's Speech—Business of the Session—Banquet to Earl Grey—Fire in the Dublin Custom House—Burning of the House of Parliament—Death of Earl Spencer—Dismissal of the Melbourne Ministry—The Lord Chancellor's Tour in Scotland—The Duke of Wellington sent for—His Account of the Ministerial Crisis—Sir Robert Peel Prime Minister—The Duke of Cumberland—Lord Stanley and the Conservative Whigs—Policy of the Peel Administration—Civic Banquet to the new Ministers—Meeting at the London Tavern—Liberal Reaction—Effect of the change of Ministry in Ireland—O'Connell—Lord Chancellor Sugden—The Rev. Dr. Boyton—The General Election—Outrages in Scotland—Agitation in Ireland—Meeting of Parliament—Election of a Speaker—The Lichfield House Compact.

On the 15th of August parliament was prorogued by the

king in person. The speech referred to the postponement of a final settlement between Holland and Belgium, which his majesty regretted. He expressed lively satisfaction at the termination of the civil war in Portugal, and disappointment at the recurrence of disorders in Spain. He alluded with satisfaction to the numerous and important questions that had engaged the attention of parliament, more especially the amendment of the poor laws, and the establishment of a central court for the trial of offenders in the metropolis and its vicinity. The important subjects of jurisprudence and the reform of municipal corporations remained to be considered in the next session.

It was a stirring time, and if a great amount of legislative work was not accomplished, the cause was not the inactivity of the members of the house of commons. Sessions generally begin with great promise, and an appearance of much work to be speedily done, but a large proportion of this business comes to nothing. At the close of the preceding session, there were standing in the order book 134 notices of motions. To this number 61 were added on the first of the session, and 200 more before its close. Thus there were nearly 400 projects of reform and improvement set down for discussion during the session. But though so many of them were abortive, they are worth referring to as signs of those times, as showing the thoughts that stirred the minds of men, and the desires that impelled them to action in the early period of the reformed parliament. There was a wholesome motion that the commons should not sit after dinner. There were motions that parliament should meet occasionally in Dublin; that there should be a tax on Irish absentees; that the Royal Marriage Act should be repealed; that the hereditary peerage should be abolished; that the voting at elections should be by ballot; that the laws against drunkenness should be amended, &c. Amidst the discussions on political questions, reforms of a practical nature were not altogether neglected. The house tax, yielding £1,200,000, was remitted; the duty on almanacs was abolished; a second grant of £20,000 was made for building schools in England, and a grant of £10,000, the first of the kind, for building schools in Scotland. The penalties on marriages celebrated by priests in that country were abolished, facilities were granted for the admission and circulation through the post office of foreign newspapers, and sinecure offices in the house of commons were abolished. The royal assent was given to 143 private bills, of which 18 were on agriculture, 7 for establishing companies, 54 for improving towns and districts, 43 for improving internal communication and navigation. Select committees had sat, made laborious inquiries, and published valuable reports on sinecure offices, the law of libel, the grievances of Lower Canada, various matters affecting private individuals, steam navigation to India, medical education, the tea duties, and the education of the poor in England and Wales.

Earl Grey was not permitted to retire into private life without some popular recognition of his great public services. On the 15th of September a grand banquet was given in Edinburgh in honour of this illustrious statesman. "Probably," says the contemporary chronicle, "no minister in the zenith of his power ever before

received so gratifying a tribute of national respect as was paid on this occasion to one who had not only retired from office, but retired from it for ever. The popular enthusiasm, both in the capital and other parts of Scotland, was extreme, which the noble earl sensibly felt, and gratefully acknowledged as among the proudest circumstances of his life. The dinner took place in a large pavilion, erected for the occasion in the area of the high school, and was provided for upwards of 1,500 persons, more than 600 having been admitted after the removal of the cloth. The principal speakers were earl Grey, the lord chancellor, and the earl of Durham. Earl Grey and the lord chancellor, in their speeches, said they considered that the reform in parliament afforded the means by which all useful improvements may be obtained without violence. Both advocated a deliberate and careful, but steady course of amelioration and reform, and both derided the idea of a reaction in favour of tory principles of government. The earl of Durham avowed his opinions in favour of the ballot and household suffrage, and declared that he should regret every hour which left ancient and recognised abuses unreformed."

On the 9th of August, 1833, a fire broke out in part of the Dublin Custom House, one of the finest buildings in the United Kingdom. Owing to the immense quantity of combustible materials, the fierceness of the conflagration was something terrific. Hogsheads of sugar, puncheons of whisky, quantities of tallow, blazed up in rapid succession, and combined to produce a mass of flame which flashed its light over the whole city, and threatened to consume the shipping that crowded the river, the burning floods of whisky rushing over the quay and floating in a sheet of blue flame around the vessels. The destruction of property was enormous, and would have been much greater, but, fortunately, a large portion of the goods in bond were stored in fire-proof vaults. By great exertion the building was saved. This fire naturally produced a great sensation throughout the United Kingdom, but it was nothing in comparison to the interest excited by the burning of the two houses of parliament, which occurred on the 16th of October, 1834. The greatest deliberative assembly in the world, the British house of commons, then sat in an old, dingy, narrow apartment, whose original dimensions had been contracted by a second ceiling, a second floor, and by wainscoting to hide the pictorial representations of the mediæval ages, which savoured too much of superstition. According to the report of the lords of the privy council, who inquired into the cause of the fire, the tally-room of the exchequer had been required for the temporary accommodation of the court of bankruptcy, and it was necessary to get rid of a quantity of the old exchequer tallies, which had accumulated till they would have made about two cartloads. These tallies had been used for kindling the fires. On one occasion a quantity of them was burned in Tothill Fields. There had been a question as to the best mode of getting rid of them, and it was ultimately resolved that they should be carefully and gradually consumed in the stoves of the house of lords. But the work had been committed to workmen who were the reverse of careful. They heaped on the fuel, nearly filling

the furnaces, and causing a blaze which over-heated the flues. The housekeeper of the lords' chamber sent to them several times during the day, complaining of the smoke and heat, but they assured her there was no danger. About four o'clock in the afternoon two strangers were admitted to see the house of lords, and found the heat and smoke so stifling, that they were led to examine the floor, when they perceived that the floor-cloth was "sweating." At six o'clock the pent-up flames broke forth through the windows, and immediately the alarm was spread in all directions. The ministers, the king's sons, Mr. Hume, and others, were presently on the spot, and did all they could in the consternation and confusion. The law courts were saved by having their roofs stripped off, and causing the engines to play on the interior. The greatest efforts were made to save Westminster Hall, which was happily preserved; but the two houses of parliament were completely destroyed, together with the commons' library, the lords' painted chamber, many of the committee rooms, part of the speaker's house, the rooms of the lord chancellor and other law officers, as well as the kitchen and eating rooms. Mr. Hume had been noted for his efforts to get rid of the old houses, and to have a building worthy of the British legislature; and as the crowd saw him busy in trying to save the library, they began to joke at his expense, crying out, "Mr. Hume's motion carried without a division!" Others jestingly said that he must have been the incendiary. Few, indeed, were sorry for the old building itself, notwithstanding the venerable associations connected with it, if the inestimable historical treasures it contained could have been preserved. The public feeling was forcibly, though not elegantly, expressed by lord Althorp, when he exclaimed, "— the house of commons—save, oh! save the Hall!" He referred to Westminster Hall, but the French journals thought he meant the house of lords, which caused much amusement to those who were acquainted with the reforming tendencies of his lordship's mind. There were some fears entertained for the Abbey, also, but neither of those buildings sustained any material damage. The king promptly offered parliament the use of Buckingham Palace; but it was thought best to fit up temporary rooms on the old site, and to have them ready for next session. The committee of the privy council sat for several days, and during the whole of that time the fire continued to smoulder among the *débris*, and in the coal vaults, while the engines were heard to play from day to day within the boarded avenues. As soon as possible, the temporary halls were prepared. The house of lords was fitted up for the commons, and the painted chamber for the lords, at an expense of £30,000. On the day after the fire, the king and queen, attended by lord and lady Errol, the earl of Munster, with lords Adolphus and Frederick Fitzclarence, and several other noblemen, arrived in two private carriages. They surveyed the melancholy ruins of the ancient painted chamber of St. Stephen's chapel in the house of lords, where the fine tapestry commemorating the defeat of the Spanish Armada had been destroyed, of the committee rooms of both houses, of the galleries and lobbies, and of the journal office, the speaker's house, and the library. It should be recollected that incendiary fires

were at this time not uncommon in England, and that the London builders were then on strike. Many persons, therefore, were inclined to believe that the burning was not accidental; but nothing could be proved beyond culpable negligence on the part of the workmen.

The ministry had, as a matter of course, been much weakened by the retirement of lord Grey; but, having got through the session, it might have survived to the next meeting of parliament but for the death of earl Spencer, which occurred on the 10th of November—an event which removed lord Althorp to the house of peers. It was supposed that this would lead only to a fresh modification of the cabinet, by a re-distribution of places. For example, lord John Russell was to succeed lord Althorp as the leader of the house of commons. Lord Melbourne's administration seemed to be quietly acquiesced in, as sufficient for a time; the nation evidently assuming that, in any case, a liberal government was the necessary consequence of a reformed parliament. The public were therefore startled when it was announced on the 15th that the king had dismissed his ministers. It appeared that lord Melbourne had waited upon his majesty at Brighton, on the 14th, to take his commands as to the new arrangements he was about to make. But the king said he considered that government dissolved by the removal of lord Althorp; that he did not approve of the intended construction of the cabinet; that lord Brougham could not continue to be chancellor; that he did not approve of their intended measure with regard to the Irish church; and concluded by informing lord Melbourne that he would not impose upon him the task of completing the ministerial arrangements, but would send for the duke of Wellington. Lord Brougham had given offence to his majesty by what he conceived to be a too familiar use of his name in a speech at a public dinner during an excursion in Scotland. According to Mr. Raikes, Lord Brougham told an Aberdeen audience that he should write the king by the following post an account of the flattering reception he had met with in that city. This escapade was made the subject of a poetical *jeu d'esprit* in the *Examiner*.

Lord Melbourne returned to town that evening, the bearer of a letter to the duke, who went to Brighton on Sunday, and advised the king to send for Sir Robert Peel, who was then in Italy. A messenger was immediately sent for him, who in ten days arrived at Rome, and surprised Sir Robert Peel with dispatches announcing the king's wish that he should return to England immediately. Next morning, the right honourable baronet started for home, and arrived in London on the 9th of December. The duke of Wellington details the circumstances of this ministerial crisis in a letter to the duke of Buckingham. According to his account, the death of the late earl Spencer, which removed lord Althorp from the house of commons, from the management of the government business in that assembly, and from the office of chancellor of the exchequer, occasioned the greatest difficulty and embarrassment. His personal influence and weight in the house of commons were the main foundation of the strength of the late government; and upon his removal it was necessary for the king and his ministers to consider

whether fresh arrangements should be made to enable his majesty's late servants to conduct the affairs of the country, or whether it was advisable for his majesty to adopt any other course. The arrangements in contemplation must have reference, not only to men, but to measures, to some of which the king felt the strongest objection. He had also strong objections to some of the members of the cabinet. The duke was therefore requested to form an administration, but he earnestly recommended Sir Robert Peel as the fittest man for the office of prime minister. In the meantime he offered to hold the offices of first lord of the treasury and home secretary until Sir Robert Peel's return, lord Lyndhurst holding the great seals temporarily, subject, with all the other arrangements, to Sir Robert Peel's approbation. On the 21st lord Lyndhurst was gazetted as lord chancellor, holding in the interim his office of chief baron of the exchequer, which lord Brougham, dreading the prospect of idleness, offered to fill without salary, thus saving the country £12,000 a-year, an offer which exposed him to censure from his own party, and which he afterwards withdrew. The duke of Cumberland was in raptures with the change. Writing from Berlin, on the 5th of December, he said everybody was taken by surprise at the breaking up of the Melbourne government at that moment. According to him, the king inquired into the state of parties in the cabinet, and as to what proposals they meant to lay before parliament with respect to the Irish church and the corporate bodies. "The reply was of a nature that alarmed him, and he instantly resolved to get rid of such dangerous ministers. The appearance of the duke of Wellington at the Pavilion was, he said, a complete surprise to all the inmates, as not a living soul there had had the slightest idea of his having been sent for. I think that the conduct of the duke upon the present occasion is one of the most noble, disinterested, and magnanimous in the annals of politics, and ought to give confidence to the country in the purity of his intentions. And I equally think we are one and all bound to put our shoulders to the wheel, and aid him with all our might; and if we act thus, and do not permit ourselves to be led astray by selfish views and opinions, or allow petty jealousies to take root among us, we must succeed, though I dissemble not to myself that we must have a frightful battle to fight; therefore, I do implore all my friends not to fail me, but to be in their posts when parliament meets. Lyndhurst having accepted the seals, I think a prodigious point, and he will impress courage on any party. If I am wanted," continues the king's brother, "I can come at a moment's warning; but, for certain, shall be in town at the meeting of parliament."*

The plot thickened as it proceeded. It was suspected that the conservative section of the whigs wished for office, and that Sir Robert Peel wished to have them. Mr. Stanley (now lord Stanley, in consequence of the death of his grandfather, the earl of Derby), Sir J. Graham, and the duke of Richmond had a meeting at the duke of Sutherland's, to consider what they should do, in consequence of proposals made to them to join the administration. But as

they would not pledge themselves to forward conservative measures to the extent required, Sir Robert Peel was obliged to form a government of tories exclusively. On the 10th of the month the arrangements were completed, and the following were announced as the members of the cabinet:—First lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, Sir R. Peel; lord chancellor, lord Lyndhurst; president of the council, lord Rosslyn; privy seal, lord Wharnccliffe; secretary of the home department, Mr. Goulburn; secretary of the foreign department, duke of Wellington; secretary of the colonial department, lord Aberdeen; first lord of the admiralty, earl de Grey; secretary for Ireland, Sir H. Hardinge; president of the board of control, lord Ellenborough; president of the board of trade, and master of the Mint, Mr. Baring; paymaster of the forces, Sir E. Knatchbull; secretary at war, Mr. Herries; master general of the ordnance, Sir G. Murray. Not in the cabinet: Postmaster general, lord Marlborough; lord chamberlain, lord Jersey; lord steward, lord Wilton; master of the horse, duke of Dorset; groom of the stole, marquis of Winchester; treasurer of the navy, lord Lowther; first commissioner of land revenue, lord Granville Somerset; chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, Mr. Wynn; attorney-general, Sir F. Pollock; solicitor-general, Sir W. Follett. In Ireland:—Lord lieutenant, earl of Haddington; lord chancellor, Sir E. Sudgen; commander-in-chief, Sir H. Vivian; attorney-general, Mr. Pennefather; solicitor-general, Mr. Jackson. In Scotland:—Lord advocate, Sir W. Rae; solicitor-general, Mr. McNeill.

Sir Robert Peel did all in his power to form out of the materials at his disposal a ministry that should command the confidence of the country. On the 16th he issued an address to his constituents at Tamworth, in which he announced the policy that should guide the new government. He declared his intention to correct all proved abuses and real grievances; to preserve peace at home and abroad; to resist the secularisation of church property in any part of the United Kingdom; to fulfil existing engagements with foreign powers; to observe a strict economy in the public expenditure; and promised an impartial consideration of what was due to all interests, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial. He said:—"With regard to the reform bill itself, I accept it as a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question; a settlement which no friend to the peace and welfare of the country would attempt to disturb either by direct or insidious means. I will carry out its intentions, supposing those to imply a careful review of old institutions, undertaken in a friendly spirit, and with a purpose of improvement." On the 23rd the lord mayor of London gave a banquet to the new premier and the members of his government, with a select party of friends. In responding to the toast of his health, he expressed more fully the views by which he was to be guided in his administration. The satisfaction expressed at the elevation of the son of a cotton spinner to the highest office that can be held by a subject in the greatest empire in the world, was a source of the liveliest gratification to a large section of the commercial community, who regarded his name as the brightest in their roll of fame. The first public

* "Court and Cabinets of William IV.," &c., vol. ii, p. 146.

manifestation of this feeling was a meeting of the city bankers and merchants held at the London Tavern on the 23rd of December. Its object was to vote an address to the king, expressing approbation and gratitude for his dismissal of the late ministry, and calling Sir Robert Peel to his councils. But the reformers, headed by Mr. Grote, mustered in such force, that no resolution could be passed, and the meeting broke up in confusion. An address to the king, however, in support of the new ministry, from the merchants, bankers, ship-owners, and others connected with the city of London, received 5,730 signatures.

The first reform parliament was dissolved by proclamation on the 30th of December, after an existence of only one year and eleven months. This proceeding was regarded by the reformers as a sort of political sacrilege; a manifest flying in the face of the people; a clear declaration of an intention to destroy popular rights. It was stated "that men high in office had, in the bitterness of their mortification and passion, not hesitated to implicate the queen by name as the leader of the irresponsible advisers of a violent course; and the whigs everywhere asserted that the real object of this change was the gradual repeal of the Reform Act, and the quasi-restoration of the close borough system by means of the gradual narrowing of the franchise."*

Whatever may have been the influences at work, whether or not, as the *Times* asserted, "the queen had done it all," there is no doubt that during the past year the king had manifested symptoms of reviving conservatism, and he was supposed to have intended to break up the ministry on the resignation of earl Grey; but the prompt declaration of lord Brougham and others, that they had no intention of following that statesman's example by resigning, induced him, contrary to his wish, to continue them longer in office. The warm protestant address to the Irish prelates was trumpeted through the country, and dwelt upon as a proof of the king's dislike to the ministerial plan of church inquiry and reform. This appears to have been the main cause of the dismissal of the ministry; and the removal from the commons of lord Althorp, and the oratorical tour of the lord chancellor in the north, only secondary pretexts. Moreover, the loss of popularity by the Melbourne cabinet, and the impression which had gained ground that it was weak and incompetent, offered a favourable opportunity for its dismissal. It was looked upon as only a residuum of the original Grey ministry. After the close of the parliamentary session, it had been assailed by Mr. O'Connell with his wonted tact and power of vituperation, in a series of letters addressed to lord Duncannon. The press attacked it for dilatoriness in its reform movements, and the incapacity of its members, dwelling with particular force on the inconsistencies of lord Brougham in the autumn, in the alternate championship of radicalism and conservatism, and especially on his lordship's alleged declaration at Inverness, that if little had been done in the last session, less would be done in the next. The shopkeepers were dissatisfied at the continuance of the window duties; the agriculturists with the malt duty; the political economists with the corn laws; the friends of popular intelligence with the retention

of the newspaper stamp; and the speculative radicals with a refractory peerage, and the resistance which it had offered to further organic changes. Amidst these discontents, the *débris* of the great reform ministry of 1830 disappeared.

But with the advent of toryism, however modified, came vivid recollections of former misrule. With the liberal party, which constituted the great mass of the people in the United Kingdom, there was not room for a moment's hesitation between the men who had devoted their lives to the cause of reform, and those by whom that cause had been strenuously resisted till the hour of its triumph. It is true that Sir Robert Peel yielded with a good grace to circumstances, and there was no doubt that he would faithfully redeem any pledges he had given. But although he did not attempt to base his policy on the well-known principles of his party; though he solicited the co-operation of men who had been the able and eloquent champions of reform; though he could appeal to his own past life, to the currency bill, the jury act, and the acts for the amendment and consolidation of the criminal law, to prove that he was himself a true practical reformer; though he was willing to extend some relief to the dissenters, and to make all possible concessions to public opinion, yet it was felt that his cabinet was composed of men of a totally different spirit—men who hated reform in every shape, and who, however they might disguise their antipathies, could never be heartily reconciled to the new order of things. They were still recognised as the old inveterate opponents of popular rights, whose lives were associated with deeds of oppression, and who had never washed their hands of the monopoly, jobbing, and corruption of the old system. How could such men be expected to work faithfully and effectively the new parliamentary machinery? Was there not, on the contrary, the greatest reason to apprehend that their party propensities would impel them to thwart the action of the new system by every means in their power, and so to verify their own sinister predictions? Besides, it was not forgotten that the late ministry had been harassed and impeded in every possible form by the conservative opposition in parliament, and that in Ireland, particularly, the sound policy on which they rested had been cut from under them by their subordinates in office, who, being either Orangemen or tories, did everything to obstruct or neutralise the good intentions of the government they were paid to serve. The change of ministry was therefore regarded by the liberal party in Ireland as a great national calamity. But while the whigs in England were negligently relying on their strength, the tories were assiduously and silently increasing their force at the registries; the freeman franchise and the £50 tenant-at-will clause were the chief instruments by which they laboured to secure their restoration to power. O'Connell immediately set to work organising an agitation with the express object of hurling them from the position they had so unexpectedly attained. The first thing he did was to establish the "Anti-Tory Association," of which he was the moving spirit. It met generally three times a-week, and at every meeting he delivered a long and effective speech. The appointment of Mr. Sugden as lord chancellor roused his indignation to the utmost.

* Doubleday's "Political Life of Sir Robert Peel," vol. II., p. 196.



THE BURNING OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

"The tories," he said, "have again come in, and their first act has been to appoint an Englishman. And what!—is the bar so degraded that it will not call a bar-meeting; that it will not remonstrate; that it will not protest against degradation of Irish talent?"

On the accession of Sir Robert Peel to power, the Conservative Association of Ireland was dissolved at the suggestion of its leader, the Rev. Dr. Boyton, a fellow of Trinity College. He was at that time the great champion of political protestantism, and having a strong apprehension of papal ascendancy in Ireland, his logical and vehement eloquence had a great effect on the public mind.

orderly manner. In many places the closeness of the poll was remarkable. It was a neck and neck race between the rival candidates. In the metropolitan boroughs the ministerialists were everywhere defeated. Not one of the sixteen seats in this vast centre of influence could the government, with all its lavish expenditure, obtain. In some of the provincial towns, however—Bristol, Exeter, Newcastle, Hull, York, Leeds, Halifax, and Warrington—a tory supplanted a whig. At Liverpool the contest was intensely exciting. During the last hour of polling were seen in every direction vans, gigs, and flies in rapid motion, and the price of a vote rose from £15 to £25.



VIEW OF LIVERPOOL.

But the ultra-protestant or Orange party were by no means disposed to lay down their arms.

The care bestowed on the registries told strongly in favour of the conservatives at the English elections. The exertions they made to secure a majority were immense. It was believed at the time that the Carlton Club had expended nearly a million sterling in securing the success of their candidates in every possible way in which money could be made available. In the counties and boroughs, the whigs and radicals lost about 100 seats, but after all, the conservatives could muster only 302 members, against 356. The contests were unusually numerous and severe, but the reform act machinery worked so well, that the elections were for the most part conducted in a very

The result was the return of Lord Sandon, a moderate tory; Sir Howard Douglas, the other conservative candidate, being defeated by Mr. Ewart. In Lancashire and Hampshire both the liberal candidates were defeated. Manchester, Birmingham, Bolton, Sheffield, Preston, and most of the manufacturing towns, returned liberals. On the whole, the government had a small majority of the 500 English members, which was justly regarded as an astonishing fact, "considering how lately the country had been shaken to its foundations by the reform tempest, and eminently instructive," says Sir A. Alison, "as to the strength of the religious, loyal, and orderly feelings which characterised a large portion of the English people." Eminently instructive, also, he might have added, as to the

folly of the alarms that were excited during the reform agitation, that the monarchy and the aristocracy would be swept away, and that England would fall under the power of an unmitigated communism and rampant democracy. In Scotland, however, the Reform Act had wrought a complete revolution, and the mass of the electors so long excluded from political power used the privileges they had obtained with great zeal in favour of the party to which they were indebted for their enfranchisement. The whole of the burghs, twenty in number, returned liberal members. Five of the counties were gained by the tories and three by the whigs, where respectively they had formerly failed. Glasgow, whose voice had been neutralised by returning one representative of each party, now returned two liberals. Serious disturbances took place at Jedburgh when lord John Scott, the tory candidate, made his appearance. At Hawick, in the same county, the rioting was still worse. The persons who came to vote for him were spit upon, pelted with stones, and severely struck. In some cases they were thrown into the stream that runs through the town, and subjected to the most shocking indignities, which the judges who afterwards tried the cases declared to be "worse than death itself."

But the new government met its Nemesis in Ireland. O'Connell and the priests were resolved that, so far as in them lay, protestant ascendancy should not be re-established in that country. The Anti-Tory Association was but one of many names and forms which the Protean agitation had assumed, and all were brought to bear with concentrated power upon every point to secure the triumph of the ministerial candidates. Minor differences were sunk for the occasion, and all forces were combined against the government. The consequence was that amongst the large constituencies the cause of reform was almost everywhere successful. In Kerry, in Meath, in Youghal, and Tralee, the candidates returned were the sons and nephew of O'Connell. He himself stood a severe contest for Dublin, and was returned with Mr. Ruthven, but was unseated on petition. It was during this contest that he recommended that a "death's head and cross-bones" should be painted on the door of every elector who would support the "nefarious and blood-stained" tithe system.

It was the tremendous exertions of Mr. O'Connell and his followers that secured the triumph of the liberal party in this memorable struggle. The first trial of strength was on the election of a speaker. Parliament met on the 19th of February, and lord Francis Egerton, one of the members for Lancashire, moved that Sir C. Manners Sutton, who for eighteen years had filled the chair with the unanimous approbation of all parties in the house, should be re-elected. Mr. Denison, one of the members for Surrey, proposed Mr. Abercrombie, a gentleman of high position at the bar, and member for the city of Edinburgh. The division, it was felt on both sides, would be decisive as to the fate of the government, by showing whether or not it was supported by a majority of the new parliament which was the response given to the prime minister's appeal to the country. The house was the fullest on record, there being 626 members present. Mr. Abercrombie was elected by a majority of ten, the numbers being 316 to 306. Sir Charles Sutton

was supported by a majority of the English members—23, but his opponent had a majority of ten of the Scotch. Still, had the decision been in the hands of the British representatives, government would have had a majority of 13; but of the Irish members only 41 voted for Sutton, while 61 voted for Abercrombie. From this memorable division, two things were evident to the tories, in which the future of England for the next half century was to them distinctly foreshadowed; the first was, that the ministry was entirely, on party questions, at the mercy of the Irish catholic members: the second, that the county members of the whole empire were out-voted by the borough members in the proportion of 85 to 20, and that a large majority of the former had declared for the conservative side.*

It was stated that this result was accomplished by what was called the Lichfield House compact, which made a great noise at the time. By this compact it was alleged that a former coalition had been effected between the whigs and the Irish catholics; but they denied that there was anything formal about the arrangement. There was a meeting, it is true, at Lichfield House, when lord John Russell stated his intentions, and described what would be his parliamentary tactics. These met the concurrence of O'Connell and his friends, and to that extent alone, even by implication, did any compact exist. Mr. O'Connell was accustomed to explain his reason for supporting the whigs by a comparison which was not the most complimentary to them; he said they were like an old hat thrust into a broken pane to keep out the cold.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Royal Speech—Lord Morpeth moves an Amendment to the Address—Carried by a Majority of Seven—The King's Answer—Motion of Lord Chandos on the Malt Duties—The Appointment of Lord Londonderry as Ambassador to St. Petersburg cancelled in Deference to Public Opinion—Dissenters' Marriages—Ministerial Bill on Irish Tithes—Lord John Russell's Motion on Irish Church Temporalities—The Right of the State to Dispose of Church Property—Defeat of the Ministry on this Question—Second Defeat on their Irish Tithe Bill—Sir Robert Peel's Resignation—His Parting Statement—The Irish Church Question.

SIR ROBERT PEEL hoped that by earnestly promoting practical reforms, and improving the institutions of the country in the spirit of his manifesto, he would gradually conciliate a number of members of independent position and moderate views, so that he might be able to secure a working majority. He therefore did not resign when defeated in the first trial of strength on the election of a speaker; and the same consideration induced him to hold his ground when he was defeated on the amendment to the address. The house of commons met for the dispatch of business on the 24th of February. The speech from the throne, after lamenting the destruction of the houses of parliament, congratulated the country on the prevalent commercial prosperity, which, however, was accompanied by a general depression of the agricultural interest. The king, therefore, recommended to the consideration of parliament whether it might not be in their power, after providing for the exigencies of the public service, and con-

* Alison, vol. vi., p. 133.

sistently with the steadfast maintenance of the public credit, to devise a method for mitigating the pressure of those local charges which bore heavily on the owners and occupiers of land, and for distributing the burden of them more equally over other descriptions of property. When the address was moved, an amendment was proposed by lord Morpeth, which was designed to strike at the very existence of the new ministry. It was not a direct censure upon their policy, or a formal declaration of want of confidence; but it affirmed a policy materially differing from that which had been announced by Sir Robert Peel. It expressed a hope that municipal corporations would be placed under vigilant popular control; that the undoubted grievances of the dissenters would be considered; that abuses in the church of England and Ireland would be removed; and it lamented the dissolution of parliament as an unnecessary measure, by which the progress of these and other reforms had been interrupted and endangered. This hostile motion gave rise to a debate of intense earnestness, which lasted four nights. It was not easy to predict, during the course of the conflict, which side would be victorious. Even the whippers-in must have been doubtful of the issue; but the contest ended in the triumph of the liberals, who had a majority of seven, the numbers being 309 to 302. Of the English members, the government had a majority of 32; and of the English and Scotch together, of 16; but in Ireland, Sir Robert Peel's supporters were only 36, while the liberals mustered 59.

When the amended address was presented to the king, he wisely recollected his position as a constitutional sovereign, which had been, to some extent, compromised by the dismissal of an administration in which the country had shown no want of confidence, and by the uncalled-for dissolution of the reformed parliament after so brief an existence. His majesty, therefore, replied as follows:—"I learn with regret that you do not concur with me in the policy of the appeal which I have recently made to the sense of my people. I never have exercised, and will never exercise, any of the prerogatives which I hold, except for the single purpose of promoting the great end for which they are entrusted to me—the public good; and I confidently trust that no measure conducive to the general interests will be endangered or interrupted in its progress by the opportunity I have afforded to my faithful and loyal subjects of expressing their opinions through the choice of their representatives in parliament."

As ministers did not resign on being placed in a minority the second time, rumours were industriously circulated by their opponents that they meant to rule the country despotically; that they were about to dissolve parliament the second time, and had resolved to maintain the army on their own responsibility, without the Mutiny Act. On the 2nd of March lord John Russell, referring to these rumours, gave notice that he intended to bring forward the Irish appropriation question, and the question of municipal reform. It was for a test of this kind that Sir Robert Peel waited. In the meantime he denied that he had any such intentions as those ascribed to him. He promised that government would bring in a bill on the Irish church; but it would adhere strictly to the principle that ecclesiastical

property should be reserved for ecclesiastical purposes. He declared they would be prepared to remedy all real abuse when the report of the commissioners appointed for their investigation was received.

On the 26th of March the marquis of Chandos made an attempt to obtain some relief for the agricultural interest, which was then in a very depressed state, and the measure he proposed was the abolition of the malt tax, which brought in the sum of £4,812,000. Sir Robert Peel prophesied that if this tax were abolished they would be in for a property tax. He said: "My prophecy is, that if you repeal this tax you will make an income tax necessary; to that, be assured, you must come at last, if you repeal the malt tax. You will lay your taxes on articles of general consumption—on tobacco, on spirits, on wine—and you will meet with such a storm that will make you hastily recede from your first advances towards a substitute. To a property tax, then, you must come; and I congratulate you, gentlemen of the landed interest, on finding yourselves relieved from the pressure of the malt tax, and falling on a good, comfortable property tax, with a proposal, probably, for a graduated scale. And you who represent the heavy land of this country, the clay soils—the soils unfit for barley—I felicitate you on the prospect that lies before you. If you think that the substitute will be advantageous to your interests, be it so; but do not—when hereafter you discover your mistake—do not lay the blame upon those who offered you a timely warning, and cautioned you against exchanging the light pressure of a malt duty for the scourge of a property tax." The motion was rejected by a majority of 350 to 192. In this debate Sir Robert Peel gave some interesting information with regard to the change in the social habits of the people during the past century. In the year 1722 the population of England amounted to only 6,000,000, and the beer consumed was 6,000,000 barrels, giving one barrel to every man, woman, and child. In 1833 the population was 14,000,000, and yet the annual consumption for the last three years preceding the repeal of the Beer Act was only 8,200,000 barrels, being little more than half a barrel for each person. So large a consumption of beer in the olden times might strike us as indicating intemperate habits; but it should be remembered that beer was then the ordinary beverage taken at meals for which tea and coffee have since been substituted. If the number of cups of tea each person drinks in the year could be ascertained, the quantity would be found more than a barrel. But if the number of cups cannot be ascertained, the number of ounces may. Sir Robert Peel stated that in 1834 the consumption of tea had increased, since 1722, from 870,000 lbs., or an ounce to each person, to 31,829,000 lbs., or 2½ lbs. to each person. The consumption of coffee was only three-fourths of an ounce for each person, and it increased in nearly the same proportion. The consumption of spirits also increased greatly, having nearly doubled in the period mentioned.

The premier was at this time subjected to a great mortification, in being compelled by the house of commons, and public opinion out of doors, to cancel the appointment of the marquis of Londonderry as ambassa-

dor to St. Petersburg. A deep sympathy pervaded the public mind in the United Kingdom with the oppressed Poles, and an abhorrence of the unrelenting despotism of Russia. The marquis of Londonderry had distinguished himself by sympathies of an opposite kind—by manifesting distrust of the people, and by favouring a policy at home and abroad which aimed at keeping down the democracy. It was generally felt that England could not be fairly represented at the court of St. Petersburg by a man of such well-known sentiments. The press was loud in its condemnation of the appointment, and Mr. Sheil brought the subject before the house of commons by moving that an address be presented to his majesty for a copy of the appointment. As lord Stanley declared emphatically against the selection of the noble marquis for such a mission, it was evident that if government had gone to a division they would have been defeated. Sir Robert Peel therefore gave way with a good grace, stating that the appointment had not been formally made out; and though the house seemed to be interfering unduly with the royal prerogative, he would not advise his majesty to persist in it. The motion was then withdrawn, and when lord Londonderry read the report of the debate in the papers next day, he immediately sent in his resignation.

In announcing this in the house of peers, he said: "Having but one object, and that to serve the king honestly, and to the best of my ability, were I to depart from this country, after what has passed in the house of commons, I should feel myself, as a representative of his majesty, placed in a new, false, and improper position. My efficiency would be impaired, and it would be impossible for me to fill the office to which I have been called with proper dignity or effect. Upon these grounds, I have now to announce that no consideration will induce me to accept the office which his majesty has been graciously pleased to confer on me."

The spirit in which the liberal organs of public opinion regarded the appointment may be inferred from a sentence in the *Times*: "We notice, merely to discountenance an absurd report, that lord Londonderry has been, or is to be, named ambassador to St. Petersburg. The rumour is a sorry joke." Some of the noble lord's antecedents were now remembered against him. It appeared that he had been soliciting a pension from lord Liverpool as a reward for diplomatic services already too liberally paid for, and that his lordship had written on the back of the application, "This is too bad." It was now felt to be too bad that a nobleman who had derided the claims of the Poles as rebellious subjects, and who had evinced a warm sympathy with such brutal despots as Don Carlos and Don Miguel, should have received one of the most important diplomatic appointments at the disposal of the sovereign. There is no doubt that the transaction had a damaging effect upon the government.

This cannot surprise any one who knows the intensity of the feeling which the perfidy and barbarity of Russia towards the Poles had produced in the public mind throughout the United Kingdom. Indeed, the condition of Poland has always been a subject of deep interest

and sympathy, especially since its partition between Russia, Austria, and Prussia—the foulest crime ever perpetrated against freedom by a combination of despotic powers. Feeling this, we recall to our readers' recollection some points in her sad history which have already been recorded. The interest was kept up during the period of the French war by the bravery with which the Polish legions fought in other lands, and the ingratitude with which they were treated by France. To them "the tent was their home, the battle-field their country," until the hour should come when they would be enabled to reconquer their freedom, and strike down the oppressors of their country—a hope which never died in Polish hearts, whether groaning under their heavy chains at home or following the fortunes of Napoleon abroad. Freely and recklessly did they shed their blood in the cause of freedom in other countries, in the hope that some day they should receive foreign aid, to realise their patriotic aspirations. But their blood flowed in vain. In every treaty which their valour had been instrumental in winning, their services were overlooked, and their country was forgotten. In the year 1806, however, the advance of the French army into Poland excited their hopes to the utmost, and promised a restoration of their country to the position of an independent kingdom. The enthusiasm of the Poles was excited to the utmost. Polish regiments were organised with marvellous rapidity, and the army of Napoleon was increased by thousands. But Napoleon cruelly disappointed their too sanguine hopes, and dissipated their illusions. Instead of restoring the kingdom of Poland, he merely formed a small portion of his conquests into the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which he united with Saxony. Still, though deluded and disappointed by the emperor, they were ever ready to fight against their oppressors, and credulously accepted the promises which had so often deceived them, though the more reflecting portion of the people said, "We are flattered when our services are required. Is Poland always to be fed on hope alone?" Yet, when the French invaded Russia, in 1812, the more ardent of the Poles were fascinated by the arts of Napoleon. They flocked to his standard, and were full of enthusiasm, until they learned at Wilna that he had guaranteed to the emperor Francis the integrity of the Austrian possessions in Poland. In connection with the treaty of 1814, however, the restoration of Poland became a subject of anxious consideration. The justice, policy, and humanity of this measure were powerfully advocated by France and England, and a satisfactory adjustment would probably have been effected, but for the escape of Napoleon from Elba, which produced a general feeling of alarm throughout Europe, in presence of common danger, and led the other powers to acquiesce in a hasty concession by Russia, with the object of preventing the Poles from swelling the ranks of the invader. It was decided that the Grand Duchy of Warsaw should be attached to the empire under the name of the "kingdom of Poland," and that it should be governed by separate institutions. In the words of the treaty of Vienna—"The Duchy of Warsaw, with the exception of those provinces and districts which are other-

wise disposed of, is united to Russia. It shall be irrevocably bound to the Russian empire *by its constitution*, to be enjoyed by his majesty the emperor of all the Russias, his heirs, and successors, for ever." By the same treaty Galicia was restored to Austria; the Duchy of Posen was surrendered to Prussia; and the district of Cracow was formed into a republic; while the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, with a population of about four millions, reverted to Russia, was constituted into a kingdom under the sovereignty of the czar. "The kingdom of Poland," said the emperor Alexander, "shall be united to the empire of Russia by the title of its own constitution, on which I am desirous of founding the happiness of the country." The new kingdom of Poland was therefore proclaimed on the 20th of June, 1815; and on the 24th of December following a constitutional charter of the most liberal character was granted. The Roman catholic religion was established, with perfect equality of civil rights for all dissenters. The liberty of the press was recognised to the fullest extent; the inviolability of personal property was secured; all public business was to be transacted in the Polish language; and all offices, civil and military, were to be held by Poles alone. Two chambers, one of deputies and one of senators, were to constitute the national legislature. The power of the crown was subjected to proper constitutional limits. Ministers were declared responsible to the legislature, whose deliberations were to be public. The senators were appointed by the king, and to hold their offices for life. The franchise was extensive and adequate, comprising all landowners, however small, all manufacturers and shop-keepers possessing a small capital, all rectors and vicars, and all artists or mechanics distinguished for talent. The independence of the judges was guaranteed, and the king must always be crowned in Warsaw. The affairs of Poland were conducted, on the whole, according to the constitution till 1820, though from the first there had been some encroachments and breaches. But from 1820, when the Holy Alliance was established, and began to exert its malign influence, there was no disguise about the design to suppress the national independence of Poland. The grand duke Constantine, an untamed tiger, was commander-in-chief of the army in that country, and he not only trampled upon the constitution, but perpetrated outrages which betrayed a mixture of ferocity, cruelty, and cowardice altogether unparalleled. Women were insulted, reviled, and kicked, their heads were shaved, they were tarred and feathered, and thus exhibited for the amusement of their savage tormentors. A legion of spies overspread the country, and a reign of terror was established. The liberty of the press and trial by jury were abolished, giving place to arbitrary arrests, hidden condemnations and banishment to Siberia, or incarceration in foul dungeons. No diet was convoked from 1820 to 1825; and only one from that year until after the accession of Nicholas, in 1829.

Thus tortured and driven to madness, the Poles began to conspire against the brutal and perfidious tyranny by which they were oppressed. The train of revolution had been laid, and the French revolution of July, 1830, supplied the electric sparks by which it was ignited. The

army, at the same time, had got the notion that it was to be removed to the South of Europe, to assist in crushing freedom in France and other countries, and that it was to be replaced by a native Muscovite force. The students of the military schools had also been exasperated by the arbitrary arrests of some of their number; and they began to sympathise with the disaffected people. These ardent youths therefore determined to lead the van of revolution, and to strike the first blow against the oppressors of their country. On the 29th of November, 1830, in accordance with a preconcerted plan, they proceeded armed to the grand duke's palace, into which they forced their way. They were first opposed by the director of police, who was wounded, and fled; next by the Russian general, Gendere, a monster of cruelty, whom they killed. By the closing of a secret door, the grand duke was enabled to escape, undressed, through a window. The object of the insurgents was to take him prisoner, and hold him as a hostage. He succeeded, however, in getting to the barracks, which were near the palace, and the imperial guards turned out and opposed the insurgents on their return to the city, but in vain: 300 of their number were killed, and the triumphant students passed on to the city, where they liberated all the state prisoners, and were joined by the school of engineers and the students of the university. A party entered the two theatres—which were open—and exclaimed, "Women, home! Men, to arms!" The summons was instantly obeyed. The arsenal was forced—the whole city felt the electric shock; the spirit of freedom thrilled every Polish heart; and in less than two hours 40,000 men were up in arms. All the Polish troops in Warsaw, with the exception of two regiments which the grand duke forced to remain with him, joined the insurgents. Constantine made several attempts to enter the city, but was repulsed, and at length gave up the attempt in despair; and in twelve hours the revolution was completed. The functionaries of the government having abandoned their posts, an administrative council was immediately formed, consisting of men distinguished for their talents, their characters, and their services. But their policy was hesitating and moderate. Instead of carrying out the revolution with spirit, and capturing Constantine and the army, as they might have done, they allowed him to escape under a convention, issued their decrees in the name of the czar, and demanded only the restoration of the violated charter. They forgot that there should be no half measures in a revolution. When they sheathed the sword and had recourse to negotiation, the emperor, of course, required, as a preliminary, absolute submission, and implicit trust in a power already proved cruel and perfidious. They allowed the national enthusiasm to subside during the delay, and when that was done they reversed their own policy by declaring the throne vacant. Thus precious time and favourable opportunities were lost. But when they saw that negotiation was vain, they prepared for a desperate struggle with the sword, and nobly did they fight the battle of freedom. All Europe was thrilled with the tidings of their stupendous efforts and sacrifices, their displays of bravery and heroic daring,

worthy of the best times in the history of that gallant nation. On the 25th of February, 1831, the dense masses of Prussia, first brought into contact with the patriotic forces at Grochow, recoiled from the shock after a sanguinary conflict. Several battles were fought in March, and the war was continued, with varying success, during the summer. In September was fought the great battle at Warsaw, which lasted three days, and ended in the defeat of the Poles, after one of the most glorious struggles recorded in history. It was impossible that the people of England could avoid sympathising with this effort, still more warmly than with the French in their three days of July, which had such a different result. But all that the gallant Poles could get was barren sympathy and moral support, which went for little with the brutal despot, who now aimed what he regarded as a mortal blow at the life of the victim-nation. The result is described by a sympathetic writer:—"This blow proved decisive. European interference had been hoped for, but in vain; the faith of treaties had been appealed to without effect; the interests and the sympathies of the civilised nations of the west and the south had been invoked to no purpose; a powerful force still remained, and for a time, at least, a partisan warfare might have been carried on; but, thus abandoned to its own resources, Poland must at last have yielded to her gigantic antagonist. That country had no mountain fastnesses where her children, when overpowered by numbers, might take shelter; it had no fortresses capable of arresting and breaking the force of her assailants. Nothing could have saved her but a prompt and active interposition, founded on the treaty of Vienna; and such was the situation of France and England at the time, that neither judged it safe or expedient to interfere otherwise than by remonstrance. The Poles submitted. With reluctance they laid down those arms which they had taken up in the hope of re-conquering their national independence, and which they had so gloriously employed in many a hard-fought field. But all former experience of Muscovite vengeance could scarcely have prepared them for the miseries which have since been accumulated, in new and fearful forms, on their unhappy country. To say nothing of proscription and confiscation, her plains have been covered with ruins, her resources exhausted, her industry and commerce destroyed; abundance has given place to wretchedness and want; she has no longer a name or a place amongst the nations; her language, her literature, and her history cannot any more be publicly taught in her schools; and every effort has been made to destroy that sentiment of nationality which is part of the inheritance of every Pole. And all this has been done in the face of the public guarantee of the powers of Europe, if not without remonstrance, at least without any effectual opposition."

To return to home affairs. Sir Robert Peel applied himself with great energy and diligence to the legislative work that he had proposed for his government. On the 17th he moved for leave to bring in a bill to relieve dissenters from the disabilities under which they laboured with regard to the law of marriage. It was felt to be a great grievance that nonconformists could not be married except according to the rites of the established church, to which they had

conscientious objections. Attempts had been made by the whigs to relieve them, but in a hesitating manner, and with only a half recognition of the principle of religious equality. Sir Robert Peel took up the subject in a more liberal spirit and with more enlightened views. He proposed that, so far as the state had to do with marriage, it should assume the form of a civil contract only, leaving the parties to solemnise it with whatever religious ceremonies they chose. The bill for this purpose met the approval of the house, and would have satisfied the dissenters, if Sir Robert Peel had remained in office long enough to pass it. All the committees of the preceding year were re-appointed, in order to redeem, as far as possible, the time lost by the dissolution. A measure was brought forward for the improvement of the resources of the church of England, by turning some of the larger incomes to better account, and by creating two additional bishoprics, Ripon and Manchester. The premier did not act towards the dissenters in the same liberal spirit with regard to academic education as he did with regard to marriage. They were excluded from the privileges of the universities; and yet when it was proposed to grant a charter to the London University, that it might be able to confer degrees, the government opposed the motion for an address to the king on the subject, and were defeated by a majority of 246 to 136.

On the 20th of March Sir Henry Harding brought forward the ministerial plan for the settlement of the tithe question. It was proposed that in future tithes should be recoverable only from the head landlord, and that the owner should be entitled to recover only 75 per cent. of the amount, 25 per cent. being allowed for the cost of collection, and the risk and liability which the landlord assumed. He might redeem it, if he wished, at twenty years' purchase, calculated upon the diminished rate. The purchase-money was to be invested in land or otherwise for the benefit of the rectors and other tithe-owners. The arrears of 1834 were to be paid out of the residue of the million advanced from the consolidated fund, and the repayments of the clergy for the loans they had received were to be remitted. There was a good deal of discussion on this plan, Lord John Russell contending that it was the same in substance as the one brought forward last session by the late government. There was, however, some difference between the two measures. In the former, the landlords were to get two-fifths, or £40, out of every £100, securing to the clergy 77½ per cent., and involving an annual charge of 17½ per cent. on the consolidated fund. This was the shape the measure had assumed as the result of amendments carried in committee. The ministerial resolution was carried by a majority of 213 to 198.

But all this was but preliminary to the great battle which commenced on the 30th of this month, and which decided the fate of the ministry. Lord John Russell, after the house had been called over, moved, "That the house should resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to consider the temporalities of the church of Ireland, with a view of applying any surplus of the revenues not required for the spiritual care of its members to the general

education of all classes of the people, without distinction of religious persuasion." This resolution was skilfully framed to secure the support of all the liberal party, and of the English dissenters as well as the Irish catholics; all of them being able to agree upon it, and to act together without inconsistency, though each might act from different motives and with different objects. The discussion was particularly interesting, as it turned very much upon the great question of religious establishments. Lord John Russell, lord Howick, and Mr. Sheil, while fully admitting that an establishment tends to promote religion and to preserve good order. contended that it ought not to be main-

serving and extending the protestant faith in Ireland? In the course of something more than a century it was stated that its revenues had increased sevenfold, and now amounted to £800,000 a-year. Had its efficiency increased in the same proportion? Had it even succeeded in keeping its own small flocks within the fold? On the contrary, they adduced statistics to show a lamentable falling off in their numbers. For example, lord John Russell said, "By Tighe's History of Kilkenny, it appears that the number of protestant families in 1731 was 1,055, but in 1800 they had been reduced to 941. The total number of protestants at the former period was 5,238, while the population of



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tained where it fails to secure these objects, and that it must always fail when, as in Ireland, the members of the established church are only a minority of the nation, while the majority, constituting most of the poorer classes, are thrown upon the voluntary system for the support of their clergy. Concurring with Paley in his view of a church establishment—that it should be founded upon utility, that it should communicate religious knowledge to the masses of the people, that it should not be debased into a state engine or an instrument of political power—they demanded whether the church of Ireland fulfilled these essential conditions of an establishment. They asked whether its immense revenues had been employed in pre-

the county, which in 1800 was 108,000, in 1731 was only 42,108 souls. From Stuart's History of Armagh, we find that sixty years ago the protestants in that county were as two to one; now they are as one to three. In 1733 the Roman catholics in Kerry were twelve to one protestant, and now the former are much more numerous than even that proportion. In Tullamore, in 1731, there were 64 protestants to 613 Roman catholics; but according to Mason's parochial survey, in 1818 the protestants had diminished to only five, while the Roman catholics had augmented to 2,455. On the whole, from the best computation he had seen—and he believed it was not exaggerated one way or the other—the entire number of protestants

belonging to the established church in Ireland can hardly be stated higher than 750,000; and of those 400,000 are resident in the ecclesiastical province of Armagh."

Such being the facts of the case, the liberals came to the conclusion that a reform was inevitable. In order to adapt the establishment to the requirements of the protestant population, there must be a large reduction, and the surplus funds that remained ought to be applied to some object by which the moral and religious instruction of the people would be promoted. The least objectionable mode in which the money could be applied was the general education of the poor under the national board, by which children of all denominations could be educated in harmony together, as they had been ever since its establishment. The reformers denied that there was any analogy between the revenues of the established church and private property. The acts of parliament securing those revenues had all treated them as being held in trust for the benefit of the nation; and after leaving ample means for the due execution of the trust, so far as it was really practicable, the legislature was competent to apply the balance in accomplishing by other agency than the protestant clergy, to some extent at least, the objects originally contemplated by the founders of the religious endowments.

The case of the Irish church was stated by Sir Robert Peel, lord Stanley, and Sir James Graham, who argued that its revenues were greatly exaggerated, subjected to heavy drawbacks and deductions. The vestry cess had been abolished. A tax exclusively borne by the clergy of three to fifteen per cent. had been laid upon all livings, and the Church Temporalities Act provided that in all parishes in which service had not been performed from 1830 to 1833, when a vacancy occurred, there should be no re-appointment, and the revenues of that living, after paying a curate, should be destined to other parishes differently situated, but for purposes strictly protestant. Here, then, is a provision already made for the progressive diminution or extinction of the episcopal church in those districts where it is not called for, and can be of no utility. Whence, then, the anxiety to take away a surplus, which, in all probability, will not exceed £100,000 a year, from a church already subjected to such heavy and exclusive burdens? It is not pretended that the object of this appropriation is to apply the income seized to the payment of the national debt, or that it is justified by any state necessity. They argued that if the appropriation clause, as now shaped, once passed into law, not only would the protestant faith cease to be the established religion in Ireland, but the measure would be fatal to the established church in England also. It was to avoid that danger that the Irish legislature at the union had stipulated for the safety of the protestant church, and without going the length of contending that those articles were like the laws of the Medes and Persians, which could not be altered, yet they should not be infringed upon without evident and pressing necessity; and if there was any one Irish interest that should be treated with special tenderness, it was that of the church, which, owing to the minority which constituted its adherence, was beset with peculiar dangers. Besides, it was asked, what chance was there that the concessions of

this principle and the alienation of church property would pacify the Roman catholics, or heal the divisions of that unhappy country? Would resistance to the payment of tithe to a protestant church be removed by applying a small fraction of its income to a different purpose? Suppose the incumbents were removed from one-fourth of the parishes in Ireland, and their revenues applied to the national schools, would that alleviate the discontent in the remaining three-fourths, where the incumbents still resided and performed their functions? Would it not rather increase the agitation by encouraging the hope that by perseverance the church would be stripped of all her revenues? The measure, therefore, instead of bringing peace, would only stimulate strife and protract war. In fact, the conservatives contended that this was only the first of a series of measures avowedly intended to annihilate the protestant establishment. What said archbishop M'Hale in 1833, after four years' enjoyment of the rights and privileges granted by the Emancipation Act? He said, "After all the evils which have fallen on this devoted land, it is a consolation to reflect that the legislative axe is at last laid to the root of the establishment. The pruners of our ecclesiastical establishments have not read the Roman history in vain, when the two overshadowing plants which spread their narcotic poisonous influence all around them have been laid low. This is but the prelude of a further and still more enlarged process of extinction. By every reform abuses will be removed, until it is to be hoped, not a single vestige of that mighty nuisance will remain." Mr. O'Connell was not less frank in his avowal of ulterior objects. In October, 1834, he said:—"It is quite true that I demanded but a partial reduction. It was three-fifths of the tithes. Why did I ask no more? Because I had no chance, in the first instance, of getting the whole abolished; and I only got two-fifths, being less than I demanded. I had, therefore, no chance of getting the entire destroyed; and, because I am one of those who are always willing to accept an instalment, however small, of the real national debt—the people's debt—I determined to go on, and look for the remainder when the first instalment should be completely realised. My plan is to apply that fund in the various counties of Ireland, to relieve the occupiers of land from grand jury cess, and to defray the expense of hospitals, infirmaries, and institutions for the sick." In other words, said the conservatives, Mr. O'Connell proposed to confiscate the property of the church, in order to relieve the land from its appropriate burdens, and to exempt it from the support of the poor. They argued, therefore, that on no reasonable ground could it be maintained that this concession to Irish agitation could have any other effect than stimulating the agitators to make fresh demands. Sound policy required that the protestant establishment should be maintained in Ireland. It is the essence of an establishment to be universal. There must be a clergyman in every parish. His provision must be certain beyond the reach of fraud or agitation, beyond the reach of popular influence, so that he may not be obliged to adapt the doctrine to the taste of his hearers, or to lower the standard of truth. It must be sufficient for the support of a family in decent competence, for the clergy are permitted to

marry, and must not be socially inferior to the more respectable portion of their parishioners. The livings of Ireland were by no means above this standard, many of them were below it. For example, there were 570 under £250 a-year; 854 under £450 a-year, and 948 under £500 a-year. The whole, Sir James Graham estimated, would not average more than £200 a year. "It behoves the whigs," said he, "in a peculiar manner to oppose this mischievous and disastrous revolution. Whig principles consist not in death's heads and cross-bones, denunciations against those who venture to exercise their civic franchises according to their consciences, nor in prayers for mercy limited to those in heaven, but not to be extended to those on this side the grave. Genuine whig principles consist in a warm attachment to civil freedom, and the protestant religion as by law established. This is a vital question, upon which no further compromise can be made. The property set apart by our ancestors to maintain and propagate the protestant religion is sacred, and ought only to be applied to sacred uses. More than this, those who minister at the altar ought to live by the altar. That principle is high as heaven, and you cannot reach it; it is strong as the Almighty, and you cannot overturn it; it is fast as the eternal, and you cannot unfix it. It is binding on a legislature consisting of Christian men, and acting on Christian principles, and no consideration on earth should induce you to compromise or destroy it." Sir Robert Peel, who argued all through upon the supposition that the concession of the appropriation principle involved the destruction of the established church, stated, that though he might be compelled to succumb to an adverse vote, he should ever condemn the procedure of procuring that vote at the expense of the Irish church, rather than by means of a direct motion of want of confidence in the government. He believed that on this question the house was not an expression of national opinion; he believed that his view was that of the large majority of the people; and he therefore felt strong to meet the decision that might ensue from his adherence to his view of duty to the Irish church.

The debate lasted four nights, and was kept up with the greatest spirit and vigour. The division was taken between three and four o'clock in the morning, when it was found that in a house of 611 members the numbers were—for the motion, 322; against it, 289; leaving the government in a minority of 33. A cabinet council was held on the following day, when it was unanimously resolved to await the result of the debate on the Irish tithe question on the same evening. Lord John Russell, on the report of the committee being brought up, moved the following resolution:—"That it is the opinion of this house that no measure upon the subject of tithes in Ireland can lead to a satisfactory and final adjustment which does not embody the principle contained in the foregoing resolution." He referred to the principle of the appropriation clause. On this an animated debate followed, which lasted till one o'clock in the morning. When the house divided, it was found that the resolution was carried by a majority of twenty-seven; the numbers being—ayes, 285; noes, 258.

As these divisions took place on a question of vital policy, Sir Robert Peel had no alternative but to resign. Accord-

ingly, he announced his decision in the house next day. After the extraordinary efforts that he had made, and considering the circumstances under which he was called upon to assume the reins of government, it must have been very painful to him to be thus cut short in his patriotic labours; but he bore the disappointment with admirable spirit, and retired from his position so gracefully that he was warmly cheered from all parts of the house. In making his parting announcement, he said: "The government, being firmly resolved to adhere to the principle of their own bill, and not to adopt the principle of the vote of last night, felt it to be their duty as public men to lay their offices at the disposal of his majesty. I have been anxious to make this explanation as briefly as I can, and in a manner the least calculated to give offence, or excite angry feelings. My whole political life has been spent in the house of commons; and whatever may be the conflict of parties, I, for one, shall always wish, whether in a majority or a minority, to stand well with the house of commons. Under no circumstance whatever, under the pressure of no difficulties, under the influence of no temptation, will I ever advise the crown to forego that great source of moral influence which consists in a strict adherence to the spirit, the practice, and even the letter of the constitution."

It may be as well to dispose here of the Irish church question; for although lord Morpeth, on the part of the Melbourne administration, brought in a bill for settling the question, which passed the house of commons by a majority of 26 votes, and which contained the appropriation clause,—in the house of lords, this clause was struck out, and it was otherwise altered in committee so materially that, when sent back to the commons, they scarcely knew their own offspring. The bill was therefore disowned, and thrown out.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Second Melbourne Ministry—State of Public Feeling—Effects of the Peel Administration—O'Connell and the Government—Proposed Expulsion of O'Connell from Brookes's—O'Connell Challenged by Lord Alvanley—Duel between his Lordship and Mr. Morgan O'Connell—Quarrel between O'Connell and Disraeli—Efforts to Damage the Melbourne Government through O'Connell—Polemical Crusade in Ireland—Peter Dens—City Banquet to Sir Robert Peel—Difficulties of the Melbourne Cabinet—Sydney Smith's Sketch of the Premier—Corporation Reform—Commission of Inquiry on the State of the Municipal Bodies; their Report—The Evils and Anomalies of the System—The English Municipal Reform Bill—Objections of the Conservatives—The Freemen—Principles and Provisions of the Municipal Act—The Reformed Corporations—The Irish Corporations worse than the English—Report of the Commissioners—The Irish Municipal Reform Bill—Determined Opposition of the Lords—Its agitating Effect on the Public Mind—The Struggle ended in 1840—The Irish Reform Act—Municipal Reform in Scotland.

WHEN Sir Robert Peel delivered up the seals of office, the first thing the king did was to send for earl Grey, who declined the task of forming an administration. It was understood that he advised his majesty to entrust it to viscount Melbourne. The business, therefore, devolved upon him, and he hastened to complete it out of such materials as he had at his command. These were substantially the same as those which composed his former administration. Lord Brougham, however, was now left out; also lord Althorp, who, being in the upper house as earl Spencer, did not

seem to have any ambition for the toils and honours of office. Lord Howick, the eldest son of earl Grey, became a member of the cabinet. There was no lord chancellor appointed for the present. The great seal was put in commission, the three commissioners being the master of the rolls, the vice-chancellor, and Mr. Justice Beausanquet. The offices were distributed as follows:—Lord Melbourne, premier; the marquis of Lansdowne, president of the council; lord Palmerston, foreign secretary; lord John Russell, home secretary; Mr. Charles Grant, colonial secretary; Mr. Spring Rice, chancellor of the exchequer; viscount Duncannon, lord privy seal and chief commissioner of woods and forests; lord Auckland, first lord of the admiralty; Sir John Hobhouse, president of the Indian board; Mr. Paulet Thompson, president of the board of trade; lord Howick, secretary-at-war; lord Holland, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster. The appointments not in the cabinet were:—Sir Henry Parnell, paymaster of the forces; the marquis of Conyngham, postmaster-general; Mr. Charles Wood, secretary to the admiralty; Sir George Grey, under secretary of the colonies; the honourable Fox Maule, under secretary for the home department; Mr. Labouchere, vice-president of the board of trade and master of the Mint; attorney-general, Sir John Campbell; solicitor-general, Mr. Rolfe. The Irish appointments were:—The earl of Mulgrave, lord lieutenant; lord Morpeth, chief secretary; lord Plunket, chancellor; serjeant Perrin, attorney-general; Mr. Michael O'Loughlin, solicitor-general. In Scotland, Mr. Cutlar Fergusson became judge advocate, Mr. J. A. Murray lord advocate, and Mr. Cunningham solicitor-general.

The changes of ministers and some additions to the peerage caused several elections. Mr. Littleton was raised to the upper house with the title of lord Hatherton, and Mr. Charles Grant as lord Glenelg. Lord John Russell having lost his election for South Devon, colonel Fox made way for him at Stroud, which the noble lord continued to represent for many years. Lord Palmerston had been defeated in Hampshire at the general election; but Mr. Kennedy retired to make way for him at Tiverton, which has had the honour of being represented by the noble lord ever since. Lord Morpeth had to stand a severe contest in Yorkshire, but he was returned by a large majority. The tide of popular opinion had turned in favour of the whigs, if tide it might be called, where there was so little excitement with regard to politics. The nation, however, felt that it would be safer for all the interests obtained by parliamentary reform to be governed by the liberals than the tories. It is true that in Sir Robert Peel's administration Toryism was not reduced to practice; there was no defence of proved abuses, no screening of what needed to be reformed. The public wants and feelings were consulted, and economy in the public expenditure was cultivated. In fact, there was every reason to expect that the Peel administration, had it been permitted to live, would have been distinguished by a series of practical reforms which the nation would remember with gratitude. But there was a feeling of distrust in the majority of the commons—a conviction that these efforts to conciliate public

favour were made only to obtain a firm hold of power, and that when that was accomplished the innate and incurable propensities of the party would break forth. Hence, there was a determination from the first to turn them out as soon as possible, and it was for this purpose the appropriation clause was brought forward.

There is no doubt, however, that the Peel administration, short as it was, tended very materially to serve the tory party, by restoring much of the conservative element to the house of commons. The excitement of the reform agitation gave a great preponderance of liberalism at the general election which followed the passing of the bill. The ministry of lord Melbourne was regarded with comparative indifference, so that when it was dismissed by the king, although the liberal party resented the proceeding, there was not much national enthusiasm to resist the government influence and the influence of the tory gentry at the elections. The consequence was that Sir Robert Peel had a majority of the English and Scotch members, and it was only by the Irish that the scale was turned in favour of the whigs. It was, then, a great point for Sir Robert Peel to achieve when he made the house of commons so much more conservative than it had been, and did so much to redress the balance of power in parliament, that thenceforth parties became almost evenly divided. By this means the tories conceived that the country had avoided a great and tremendous risk. They said, "With the immense majority of liberals which the unexampled fervour of the public mind had introduced into the house of commons, and the proof recently afforded of the possibility of driving the house of lords to consent to anything by the threat of creating peers, new and interminable organic changes might be forced upon the government, and carried through by the influence of the heated urban electors upon their representatives in parliament, before the nation had time to recover from its transports, and thus the constitution be overturned, as it had been in France, at the gallop, no one knew how or by whom. There can be no doubt that it was entirely owing to the firmness of earl Grey and his ministry that this danger had been hitherto averted; and though he was overthrown in the attempt, he deserves the lasting thanks of the country for having made it; but now, when a majority of British members were returned on the conservative side, and only a majority, including Ireland, of ten on the liberal, this immediate danger was at an end. On any question involving any further organic changes in the constitution, it would be very doubtful whether they would have any majority in the house of commons; and quite certain that, if carried there, the lords would take courage to throw them out in the upper house. Thus, the popular branch of the legislature, from being so equally divided, was rendered in a great measure powerless either for good or evil; and this was the greatest possible advantage which could be gained, for it gave the passions time to cool, and let in the still, small voice of experience to discriminate between really beneficial reforms and those which were inexpedient from the hazard with which they were attended."*

* Alison's "History of Europe," vol. vi., p. 153.

On the 8th of April the dissolution of the Peel administration took place, and on the 18th lord Melbourne announced the completion of his arrangements. On that occasion lord Alvanley asked the premier if he had secured the assistance of Mr. O'Connell and his friends, and if so, upon what terms. "A question like this, in ordinary times, might very well," said his lordship, "have been left without an answer. But these were not ordinary times. The same ministry, when in power only a few months ago, had experienced the most determined opposition from the learned gentleman, and they denounced him in the king's speech in everything but by name; therefore he (lord Alvanley) now wished to know in what way and on what terms they stood with the learned gentleman. It was impossible to suppose Mr. O'Connell would have withdrawn his opposition to that administration unless he was pacified in some way; and he considered that the noble viscount, under the circumstances, was bound to afford the house all the information in his power." Lord Melbourne answered "that he did not coincide in opinion with Mr. O'Connell; that he had taken no means to secure his support; that he gave the most decided negative to lord Alvanley's question; adding, "And if he has been told anything to the contrary, he has been told what is false, and without foundation." On this, lord Londonderry remarked that he was glad to hear from lord Melbourne "that he had given a veto to O'Connell and his radical crew, because he was sure that any ministerial connection with him or his tail would be the curse of the country."

In the house of commons, a few days after, colonel Sibthorpe spoke of O'Connell as the prompter and adviser of the new ministry, and said: "I do not like the countenances of the honourable gentlemen opposite, for I believe them to be the index of their minds, and I will oppose them on every point, from the conviction that they could not bring forward anything that would tend to benefit the country. I earnestly hope that we shall have a safe and speedy riddance from such a band." This escapade roused the ire of O'Connell, who instantly rose and said that he thought the gallant colonel's countenance was, at all events, as remarkable as any upon the ministerial benches. He would not abate him a single hair in point of good-humour. "Elsewhere," he said, "these things may be treated in a different style. Those considered by the resolutions of this house as unfit to hold office may presume to talk of the Irish representatives in a manner highly unbecoming any member—exceedingly indecent; an indecency that would be insufferable, if it were not ridiculous. There is no creature—not even a half-maniac or a half-idiot—that may not take upon himself to use that language there which he would know better than to make use of elsewhere; and the bloated buffoon ought to learn the distinction between independent men and those whose votes are not worth purchasing, even if they were in the market."

It may be necessary to state that the opprobrious term, a "half-maniac," or a "half-idiot," was intended to apply to the marquis of Londonderry, and the "bloated buffoon" to lord Alvanley. Immediately after this, O'Connell had to return to Dublin, where he addressed a letter "To

the people of Ireland," in which he stated that he had tendered to the Melbourne government his "unbought, unpurchaseable, unconditional support. He had neither made terms nor stipulations with them. It sufficed for him that their political principles were all identified with the cause of good government, and of justice to the loved land of his birth. The tranquillity, the prosperity, the liberty of Ireland appeared to him to be identified with the maintenance in power of the present ministry; and the horrid specimen they had just had of conservative and Orange ascendancy made him smile with delight at finding the violent, bigoted oppressors deprived of power, and the prospect of a sanguinary contest between the people and the viperous Orange faction closed, he trusted, for ever." He went on to state the advantages he expected from the present ministry: protection for the people; the purification of the administration of justice, whose waters would no longer be poured through mephitic channels, but would flow in pure sources, diffusing salubrity and gladness over the thirsty land. The highest offices would no longer be abused by the dull and merciless foes of Ireland. Poor lord Haddington would be followed by the high-minded and intelligent lord Mulgrave. He therefore exhorted his followers to assist the ministry "finally to adjust all rights connected with the tithe system, so as totally to extinguish that unjust and blood-stained impost for ever;" to establish a complete corporate reform, "and to banish for ever from their usurpations that pestilent nest of corporate bigots and monopolists who have so long disgraced and plundered our towns and cities. The new ministry are placed in a situation of much difficulty, and will want all the aid of all the friends of reform and amelioration. Let Ireland become a portion of their strength and security; and let them, on their part, so deal with Ireland as to be able hereafter to look back with pride to the pacification and prosperity of this country as the work of their hands, and grateful Ireland will recognise them as the first of its benefactors."

While O'Connell was thus employed in Ireland, commending the government to the good-will of his countrymen, lord Alvanley was exerting himself to get him ignominiously expelled from Brookes's. On the 2nd of May he wrote a letter to the members, stating that O'Connell had made use of coarse and insulting expressions with regard to him, and that he had sent a challenge to him in consequence, through colonel Damer, to which he had received no answer; and he now appealed to the only tribunal of men of honour, to which they were both amenable. He therefore sent a requisition, to call a general meeting of the club, in order to take the case into consideration. The requisition was signed by twenty-three members. The managers of the club answered that it would be inconsistent with the practice and contrary to the established rules to take cognisance of differences of a private nature between the members of the club, and therefore they declined to call the general meeting. The first name on the list of the managers was lord Duncannon—now a member of the cabinet—an old friend of O'Connell, who had introduced him to the house of commons in 1828, after the Clare election, and who

exerted himself to induce the great agitator to take office in 1833. On the 1st of May O'Connell replied to three letters which he had received from colonel Damer, in which he said it was "an unvalorous absurdity to send him a challenge, when his sentiments on that subject had been so publicly and so frequently proclaimed. As to duelling, he treated it with sovereign contempt, as inconsistent with common sense, and a plain and palpable violation of religion. If, however, he had injured any man, he was willing to repair the wrong to the utmost extent of his wishes."

Thus ended the affair, so far as the elder O'Connell was concerned. But his second son, Morgan, was resolved not to let the matter rest. As soon as he heard of the proceedings in Brookes's, he wrote to lord Alvanley a very spirited letter, in which he designated the challenge as a party manœuvre, with no other object than to cast a stigma upon his father—upon the party to which he belonged, as well as upon the government and its supporters. He denounced the proceeding as a wretched manœuvre—as an utterly ungentlemanly and braggadocio mode of carrying on party warfare. He adopted his father's insulting language, not, he said, in the vain hope of inducing him to give satisfaction; but, lest he should be wrong in that surmise, he intimated that he was at his lordship's service. This letter was conveyed through colonel Hodges. The result was that the parties met at Arlington Street, when they arranged to have a meeting at a short distance beyond the turnpike next the Regent's Park, on the Barnet Road. The ground was measured at twelve paces; the parties took their positions; the word was given, "Ready—fire." O'Connell fired, but lord Alvanley did not, owing to a mistake, and claimed the right to fire, which was refused. Both parties fired two rounds more without effect, each satisfied that the other had acted with perfect fairness. There was no apology made on either side.

Mr. Morgan O'Connell soon found that he had no sinecure in undertaking to give satisfaction with the pistol for all his father's violations of the code of honour. Shortly after, Mr. Daniel O'Connell referred, in the following strong language, to an attack made upon him by Mr. Disraeli at Taunton:—"In the annals of political turpitude, there is not anything deserving the appellation of blackguardism to equal that attack upon me. What is my acquaintance with this man? Just this: in 1831, or the beginning of 1832, the borough of Wycombe became vacant. I knew him, but not personally; merely as the author of one or two novels. He got an introduction to me, and wrote me a letter, stating that, as I was a radical reformer, and he was also a radical, and was going to stand upon the radical interest for the borough of Wycombe, where, he said, there were many persons of that way of thinking, who would be influenced by my opinion, he would feel obliged by receiving a letter from me recommendatory of him as a radical. His letter to me was so distinct upon the subject, that I immediately complied with his request, and composed as good an epistle as I could on his behalf. I am in the habit of letter-writing, sir, and Mr. Disraeli thought this letter so valuable, that he not only took the auto-

graph, but had it printed and placarded. It was, in fact, the ground upon which he canvassed the borough. He was, however, defeated, but that was not my fault. I did not demand gratitude from him, but I think, if he had any feeling of his own, he would conceive I had done him a civility at least, if not a service, which ought not to be repaid by atrocity of the foulest description. The next thing I heard of him was, that he had started upon the radical interest for Marylebone, but was again defeated. Having been twice defeated on the radical interest, he was just the fellow for the conservatives, and accordingly he joined a conservative club, and started for two or three places on the conservative interest. How is he now engaged? Why, in abusing the radicals, and eulogising the king and the church, like a true conservative. At Taunton, this miscreant had the audacity to style me an incendiary! Why, I was a greater incendiary in 1831 than I am at present, if I ever were one—and if I am, he is doubly so for having employed me. Then he calls me a traitor. My answer to that is—he is a liar. He is a liar in action and in words. His life is a living lie. He is a disgrace to his species. What taste of society must that be that could tolerate such a creature, having the audacity to come forward with one set of principles at one time, and obtain political assistance by reason of those principles—and at another to profess diametrically the reverse? His life, I say again, is a living lie. He is the most degraded of his species and kind; and England is degraded in tolerating or having upon the face of her society a miscreant of his abominable, foul, and atrocious nature. My language is harsh, and I owe an apology for it; but I will tell you why I owe that apology. It is for this reason, that if there be harsher terms in the English language, I should use them; because it is the harshest of all terms that would be descriptive of a wretch of his species. He is just the fellow for the conservative club. I suppose if Sir R. Peel had been out of the way, when he was called upon to take office, this fellow would have undertaken to supply his place. He has falsehood enough, depravity enough, and selfishness enough, to become the fitting leader of the conservatives. He is conservatism personified. His name shows he is by descent a Jew. His father became a convert. He is the better for that in this world; and I hope, of course, he will be the better for it in the next. There is a habit of underrating that great and oppressed nation—the Jews. They are cruelly persecuted by persons calling themselves Christians—but no person ever yet was a Christian who persecuted. The cruellest persecution they suffer is upon their character, by the foul names their calumniators bestowed upon them before they carried their atrocities into effect. They feel the persecution of calumny severer upon them than the persecution of actual force, and the tyranny of actual torture. I have the happiness to be acquainted with some Jewish families in London, and, amongst them, more accomplished ladies, or more humane, cordial, high-minded, or better educated gentlemen, I have never met. It will not be supposed, therefore, when I speak of Disraeli as the descendant of a Jew, that I mean to tarnish him on that account.



ELECTION RIOT AT HAWICK.

They were once the chosen people of God. There were miscreants amongst them, however, also; and it must have certainly been from one of those that Disraeli descended. He possesses just the qualities of the impenitent thief who died upon the cross; whose name, I verily believe, must have been Disraeli. For aught I know, the present Disraeli is descended from him; and with the impression that he is, I now forgive the heir-at-law of the blasphemous thief who died upon the cross."

When Mr. Disraeli read this tremendous philippic, he wrote to Mr. Morgan O'Connell for satisfaction, which the latter denied his right to demand. He had not seen the attack, nor was he answerable for his father's words, though he had taken up his quarrel when Lord Alvanley, in his absence, attempted to get him expelled from the club. Not being able to get satisfaction by means of pistols, he had recourse to the pen; and, certainly, if O'Connell's attack was violent, the retaliation was not the meekest. The eminence to which Mr. Disraeli has since risen as a statesman lends additional interest and importance to the following letter:—

"To Mr. Daniel O'Connell, M.P. for Dublin.

"London, May 5.

"MR. O'CONNELL,—Although you have placed yourself out of the pale of civilisation, still I am one who will not be insulted, even by a yahoo, without chastising it. When I read this morning, in the same journals, your virulent attack upon myself, and that your son was, at the same moment, paying the penalty of similar virulence to another individual on whom you had dropped your filth, I thought that the consciousness that your opponents had at length discovered a source of satisfaction might have animated your insolence to unwonted energy; and I called upon your son to re-assume his vicarious office of yielding satisfaction for his shrinking sire. But it seems that gentleman declines the further exercise of the pleasing duty of enduring the consequences of your libertine harangues. I have no other means, therefore, of noticing your effusion but this public mode. Listen, then, to me.

"If it had been possible for you to act like a gentleman, you would have hesitated before you made your foul and insolent comments upon a hasty and garbled report of a speech, which scarcely contains a sentence or an expression as they emanated from my mouth; but the truth is, you were glad to seize the first opportunity of pouring forth your venom against a man whom it serves the interest of your party to represent as a political apostate.

"In 1831, when Mr. O'Connell expressed to the electors of Wycombe his anxiety to assist me in my election, I came forward as the opponent of the party in power, and which I described in my address as 'rapacious, tyrannical, and incapable of action'—the English whigs, who, in the ensuing year denounced you as a traitor from the throne; and every one of whom, only a few months back, you have anathematised with all the peculiar graces of a tongue practised in scurrility. You are the patron of those men now, Mr. O'Connell; you, forsooth, are 'devoted' to them. Which of us is the most consistent? You say that I was

once a radical; and now that I am a tory, my conscience acquits me of ever having deserted a political friend, or ever having changed a political opinion. I worked for a great and avowed end in 1831, and that was the restoration of the balance of parties in the state; a result which I believed to be necessary to the honour of the realm and the happiness of the people. I never advocated a measure which I did not believe tended to that result; and if there be any measures which I then urged, and now am not disposed to press, it is because that great result is obtained."

Having made some other statements in proof of his political consistency, Mr. Disraeli proceeded to repel the attack of his antagonist with regard to his origin. He says:—

"I admire your scurrilous allusions to my origin. It is quite clear that the 'hereditary bondsman' has already forgotten the clank of his fetter. I know the tactics of your church; it clamours for toleration, and it labours for supremacy. I see that you are quite prepared to persecute.

"With regard to your taunts, as to my want of success in my election contests, permit me to remind you that I had nothing to appeal to but the good sense of the people. No threatening skeletons canvassed for me; a death's-head and cross-bones were not blazoned on my banners. My pecuniary resources, too, were limited; I am not one of those public beggars that we see swarming with their obtrusive boxes in the chapels of your creed; nor am I in possession of a princely revenue wrung from a starving race of fanatical slaves. Nevertheless, I have a deep conviction that the hour is at hand when I shall be more successful, and take my place in that proud assembly of which Mr. O'Connell avows his wish no longer to be a member. I expect to be a representative of the people before the repeal of the Union. We shall meet at Philippi, and rest assured that, confident in a good cause, and in some energies which have been not altogether unproved, I will seize the first opportunity of inflicting upon you a castigation which will make you, at the same time, remember and repent the insults that you have lavished upon

"BENJAMIN DISRAELI."

This is moderate, compared with the following to O'Connell's son, which is wholly indefensible:—

"31 A, Park Street, Grosvenor Square, May 6, 1835.

"SIR,—Not having been favoured with your reply to my second letter of yesterday, I thought fit to address a letter to your father—and for this reason, I deduce from your communication, delivered by Mr. Ffrench, that you do not consider yourself responsible for any insults offered by your father, but only bound to resent the insults which he may receive. Now, sir, it is my hope that I have insulted him; assuredly it was my intention to do so. I wish to express the utter scorn in which I hold his character, and the disgust with which his conduct inspires me. If I failed in conveying this expression of my feelings to him, let me more successfully express them now to you. I shall take every opportunity of holding your father's name up to public contempt, and I fervently pray that you, or some one of his blood, may attempt to avenge the unex-

tinguishable hatred with which I shall pursue his existence. I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,
 "Morgan O'Connell, Esq., M.P." "B. DISRAELI.

Great efforts were at this time unceasingly made to damage the new government through O'Connell. The *London Post, Herald, and Standard*, as well as the tory press throughout the country, were daily filled with attacks upon him. A polemical crusade was organised in Ireland, which had in it a strong mixture of the political element. The Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan, the Rev. Robert M'Ghee, and captain Gordon—a Scotchman, who became member for the borough of Dundalk—were the ablest and most active leaders of this movement. The armoury from which they drew most of their weapons was a work on "Systematic Theology," by Peter Dens, which advocated the divine right of catholic kings, the lawfulness of breaking faith with heretics for the interest of the church, and a great deal of casuistical matter connected with the confessional, which, when deprived of the decent veil of the Latin in which it was written, and translated into English, was a sort of reading not at all suited to the female sex, nor edifying to the youth of the land. Yet the protestant agitators, in their zeal, did all in their power to give it publicity. These matters were made to tell with peculiar force against the government of lord Melbourne in Ireland.

Shortly after Sir Robert Peel's retirement from office, a public dinner was given to him in the Merchant Tailors' Hall, to which the duke of Wellington and other leading conservatives were invited. On the morning before the banquet, the following placard was posted up in a conspicuous part of the city:—"Poor men, take notice! A dinner to Peel will be given by the rump of the Pitt and plunder faction, assisted by the self-elected and corrupt courts of assistants of the grocers, tailors, goldsmiths, and skimmers; seven city aldermen, seven poverty-stricken peers, twenty-nine defeated candidates, three bishops, a bloated buffoon, the idiot, and a mayor, on Monday next, May the 11th. The expenses to be defrayed out of the funds left for charitable purposes." This placard was denounced as a false and scandalous libel on the wealth and intelligence of the metropolis. The conservative journals stated that the dinner was attended by the principal merchants in London, and that speeches of a strong conservative character were received with universal applause. Sir Robert Peel addressed the meeting at considerable length, and it was on this occasion he uttered the memorable sentence which fructified so well for the benefit of his party. "The battle of the constitution must be fought at the registries." He dwelt upon the fact, that henceforth the house of commons must be the dominant power in the state, and that a party that aspired to rule the destinies of this country must pay particular and incessant attention to the elective franchise.

It was not till the 18th of April that lord Melbourne was able to announce the completion of his arrangements. In forming his cabinet he had to contend with difficulties "peculiarly great and arduous, and some of them of a severe and mortifying nature." He had no change of policy to announce. "His government would be based upon the principles of a safe, prudent, and truly efficient

reform—principles, the tendency of which was not to subvert or endanger, but, on the contrary, to improve, strengthen, and establish, the institutions of the country; and in regard to ecclesiastical government, every measure contemplated in reference to that subject would have for its end the increase of true piety and religion through the whole of his majesty's dominions." From the disposition and character popularly ascribed to lord Melbourne, it could not be expected that he should prove an energetic reformer. The earl of Derby mentions a saying of his which often escaped him as a member of lord Grey's cabinet. When they had to encounter a difficulty, he would say, "Can't you let it alone?" This accords with the portrait of him presented by Sydney Smith. "Lord Melbourne," he said, "declared himself quite satisfied with the church as it stood; but if the public had any desire to alter it, they might do so if they pleased. He might have said the same thing of the monarchy or of any other institution, and there is in the declaration a permissiveness and good humour which in public men has seldom been exceeded. Carelessness, however, is but a poor imitation of genius; and the formation of a wise and well-reflecting plan of reform conduces more to the lasting fame of a minister than the affected contempt of duty which every man sees to be mere vanity, and a vanity of no very high description. Everything about him seems to betoken careless desolation; every one would suppose from his manner that he was playing at chuck-farthing with human happiness, that he would giggle away the great charter, and decide by the method of testotum whether my lords the bishops should retain their seats in the house of lords. All this is the mere vanity of surprising and making us believe he can play with kingdoms as other men can with nine-pins. I cannot, however, allow to this minister the merit of indifference to his actions. I believe him to be conscientiously alive to the good or the evil he is doing, and that his caution has more than once arrested the gigantic projects of the Lysurgus of the lower house. I am sorry to be obliged to brush away the magnificent fabric of levity and gaiety he has reared; but while I accuse our minister of honesty and diligence, I deny that he is careless or rash; he is nothing more than a man of good understanding and good principles, disguised in the eternal and somewhat wearisome affectation of a political *roué*."*

Notwithstanding the careless manner thus ridiculed, there was much sincerity in the nature of lord Melbourne; and there is no doubt that he laboured with an honest purpose to make his administration useful to the country, though not with so much activity and energy, or with such constant solicitude to secure success, as his predecessor had brought to the task. As it was now advancing towards the end of the session, he confined his attention to two great measures of reform—the Irish tithe question (of which we have already disposed) and the question of municipal reform. It is scarcely necessary to remark that abuses in corporations had been a matter of constant and general complaint for two centuries. But it was hopeless

* Sydney Smith's Works, vol. iii., p. 216.

to expect a remedy so long as the parliamentary representation was so inadequate and corrupt. The rotten and venal boroughs, of which the franchise was abolished or amended by the Reform Act, were the chief seats of abuse. The correction of the local evil would have been the destruction of the system by which the ruling party in the state sustained its political power. There were, therefore, the most powerful interests at work, restraining each from attempting the work of reform; but by the parliamentary Reform Act these interests were abolished, and those local fountains of corruption could no longer pour their fetid contents into the legislature. Statesmen now felt at liberty to abate those nuisances. Yet the work was not as speedily accomplished as might have been expected. It is true that lord Grey advised the king to issue a commission of inquiry in July, 1833, but it was not until the 5th of June, 1835, that any measure was brought forward upon the subject. The commission consisted of twenty gentlemen, who were to proceed with the utmost dispatch to inquire as to the existing state of the municipal corporations in England and Wales, and to collect information respecting the defects in their constitution, to make inquiry into their jurisdiction and powers as to the administration of justice, and in all other respects; and also into the mode of electing and appointing the members and officers of such corporations, into the privileges of the freemen and other members thereof, and into the nature and management of the income, revenues, and funds of the said corporations. They divided the whole of England and Wales into districts, each of which was assigned to two commissioners. Their reports on individual corporations occupied five folio volumes. The whole was presented in a general report, signed by sixteen of the commissioners. Two of them, Sir Francis Palgrave and Mr. Hogg, dissented, and signed protests, which were printed; but no great weight was attached to them. The report concluded as follows:—"Even where these institutions exist in their least imperfect form, and are most rightfully administered, they are inadequate to the wants of the present state of society. In their actual condition, where not productive of positive evil, they exist, in the great majority of instances, for no purpose of general utility. The perversion of municipal institutions to political ends has occasioned the sacrifice of local interests to party purposes, which have been frequently pursued through the corruption and demoralisation of the electoral bodies. In conclusion, we report to your majesty that there prevails amongst the inhabitants of a great majority of the incorporated towns a general—and, in our opinion, a just—dissatisfaction with their municipal institutions; a distrust of the self-elected municipal councils, whose powers are subject to no popular control, and whose acts and proceedings, being secret, are unchecked by the influence of public opinion; a distrust of the municipal magistracy, tainting with suspicion the local administration of justice, and often accompanied with contempt of the persons by whom the law is administered; a discontent under the burdens of local taxation, while revenues which ought to be applied for the public advantage are diverted from their legitimate use, and are sometimes wastefully bestowed for the benefit of

individuals, or squandered for purposes injurious to the character and morals of the people. We, therefore, feel it to be our duty to represent to your majesty that the existing municipal corporations of England and Wales neither possess nor deserve the confidence or respect of your majesty's subjects, and that a thorough reform must be effected before they can become what we humbly submit to your majesty they ought to be—useful and efficient instruments of local government."

The number of places in which the inquiries under the commission were carried on was 237, having a population of 2,028,513. In twenty-five places the number of corporators was not ascertained; in the others (212), they amounted to 88,509. The governing body was self-elected in 186 boroughs. This body elected the mayor in 131 boroughs, appointed the recorder in 136, and the town-clerk in 135. The number of corporators exercising magisterial functions was 1,086, in 188 boroughs. In 112 boroughs the corporations had exclusive criminal jurisdiction, extending to the trial of various descriptions of offences, and in forty-two their jurisdiction was not exclusive. Seventeen boroughs did not enjoy any income whatever; in eight the precise amount could not be obtained. The total income of 212 boroughs amounted to £366,948; their expenditure to £377,027. 103 were involved in debts amounting to £1,855,371, and were besides burdened with annuities amounting to £4,463. In twenty-eight boroughs only were the accounts published; in fifteen, the annual income was under £20; in eleven, it was between £2,000 and £3,000; in five, £3,000, and under £4,000; in one, £4,000, and under £5,000; in four, £5,000, and under £7,500; in five, £10,000, and under £12,500; in one, £12,500, and under £15,000; in one, £15,000, and under £20,000; and in one, £91,000.

The measure which was founded on the recommendations of the report was advocated principally by lord John Russell, lord Melbourne, and Mr. C. Hobhouse. The plan was intended to provide for 183 corporations, extending to a population of at least 2,000,000. Many of these corporations governed large and important towns, of which they did not sufficiently represent the property, intelligence, and population. In Bedford the corporation composed only one in seventy of the people, and one-fortieth of the property. In Oxford there were only 1,400 electors, and seldom more than 500 voted at an election. In Norwich, 315 of the electors were paupers. In Cambridge there were only 118 freemen, out of a population of 20,000; and while the annual rental was more than £25,000, the property of freemen amounted to little more than £2,000. These were only samples of the strange anomalies that everywhere prevailed. It was obvious to every one that corporations so constituted were altogether unfitted for the objects which they were originally designed to answer. On the contrary, they tended directly to frustrate those objects, and to render the proper government of towns impracticable. They engendered jealousy and distrust between the small governing power and the body of the people. A few persons carrying on the government for their own benefit were connected with a portion of the lower classes, whose votes they purchased, and whose habits

they demoralised. With such a monopoly the grossest abuses were inevitable. Charitable funds, often large in amount, which had been left for the benefit of the whole people, were either lavishly distributed among the venal dependants of the governing body, squandered on civic feasts, or spent in bribing the freemen, in order to secure their votes. In short, the general if not the universal practice had been to use the powers of municipal corporations, not for the good government or benefit of the towns over which they presided—not in order that they might be well and quietly governed in the terms of the charters, but for the sole purpose of establishing an interest which might be useful in the election of members of parliament. It was absurd to contend that the exclusion and eventual suppression of freemen as such from the elections of members of municipal councils was a confiscation of existing rights. To leave them in possession of power was to entail upon the boroughs “the curse of these poor, degraded, wretched, demoralised voters, whose rights were nothing but an usurpation, that was tolerated because it was found to be convenient to all parties for political purposes. These freemen were not necessarily resident in the borough; they need not possess any qualification as to property; they need not pay rates; and, in fact, they might pass the greater part of the year in the poor-house, or in gaol.” The natural consequence was, that, degraded and corrupt themselves, they polluted the electoral body with which they were connected. The excision of such an utterly rotten portion of the electoral system was manifestly necessary to the well-being of the state.

It was impossible to defend a system like this, and therefore the conservatives offered no opposition to the principle of the bill; their aim being to save as much as possible of the old system, which had rendered much more service to them than to the whigs, and presented a number of barriers to the advance of democratic power. Sir Robert Peel, with lord Stanley and Sir James Graham, who were now the ablest antagonists their former whig colleagues had to encounter, pleaded powerfully for the delinquent boroughs; not for absolute acquittal, but for mitigation of punishment. They would not go the length of asserting that freemen were altogether immaculate; for of what body of electors could that be predicted? “To err is human;” our nature is corrupt. It is a matter of course, therefore, that some measure of sin should be expected from every class of men; but were those who only partook of the general depravity to be disfranchised—altogether deprived of their political rights? The question was not whether it was right to admit these men for the first time, but whether they should be deprived of the rights that they and their ancestors had enjoyed for centuries. The reformers were the first to propose, covertly and insidiously, a great and important change in the reform bill. What did they mean by first bringing in a bill which was based on perpetuating the rights of freemen and recognising them as an integral part of the constitution, and now, within three years, bringing in another intending to deprive them of their rights? Was not this a precedent for breaking up the final settlement, which might be followed on future occasions? Might not another ministry deem it for their

advantage to extinguish the £10 electors? And where was this to stop? Could it stop while a fragment remained of the Reform Act—the boasted second charter of the people of England? If there were guilty parties, let them be punished. Let convicted boroughs be disfranchised; but let not whole bodies of electors be annihilated because some of their members may have been corrupt. Were the £10 voters perfectly immaculate? and, if not, on what principle were they spared, while the freemen were condemned? The whigs had created the reform act; but now—infatuated men!—they were about to lay murderous hands upon their own offspring.

Thus argued the conservatives, and not without effect, for the clause against disfranchising the freemen was carried only by a majority of twenty-eight; and in the passage through the lords several important amendments were carried against the government, owing chiefly to the vigorous opposition of lord Lyndhurst. On an amendment which he proposed—to omit the clause disfranchising the freemen—he defeated the government by a majority of 93; the numbers being 130 to 37. He followed up this victory by a motion to secure to the freemen their parliamentary franchise, which was carried without a division. The commons thought it better to adopt most of these alterations, however repugnant to their feelings, rather than lose the measure. The bill, as amended, was accordingly passed on the 7th of September. London, with its numerous and wealthy incorporated guilds, was reserved for future legislation.

The great feature of this reform is that it secures local self-government. The basis of this government is the rated and resident population. Every male person of full age, who on the last day of August in any year shall have occupied premises within the borough continuously within the three previous years, and shall for that time have been an inhabitant householder within seven miles of the borough, provided that he shall have been rated to the poor-rates, and shall have paid them and all borough rates during the time of his occupation, is qualified to vote for the town council. In the council is vested the entire deliberative and administrative functions of the corporation. They appoint the town-clerk and treasurer, and from them the mayor and aldermen are chosen. They have the control of the police, watching, and lighting; they may make bye-laws, and impose fines for their non-observance, for the prevention of nuisances, and the due government of the borough. They have the control of the burgess fund; if there be a surplus after defraying all necessary expenses, they may apply it to local improvements, or any object beneficial to the inhabitants; or, if the fund be insufficient, they may order a rate, of the nature of a county rate, to be levied. They have also a power, if they think it requisite that one or more salaried police magistrates should be appointed, to fix the amount of such magistrates' salaries, and upon their application, the crown is empowered to appoint the number required. To prevent fraud, jobbing, and waste in the management of the burgess revenue, provision is made for the periodical auditing of accounts, and their subsequent publication. The burgesses yearly appoint two

auditors, who must be persons qualified to be councillors, but not actually of that body, lest identity of interest should lead to partiality in the exercise of their function. There are also two assessors elected in like manner. Their duties are to assist the mayor in revising the burgess lists. The qualification of a councillor is a property qualification, varying with the amount of population: in boroughs divided into four or more wards, a real or personal estate of £1,000, or being rated to the poor upon the annual value of at least £30; in other boroughs a moiety of this qualification suffices. The qualification clause was one of the questionable amendments introduced by the lords, as well as that appointing aldermen—an order having precedence merely, and no duties distinct from those of councillors; and who appear to have been created either out of veneration for ancient names and degrees, or from a desire to preserve in the new municipalities a miniature representation of the imperial government of three estates—king, lords, and commons. All the existing rights of freedom or citizenship, or burgess-ship, in the old corporations are preserved to the present possessors. This was just; as many of these immunities consisted of an interest in charities, lands, or exemption from tolls, which had been purchased by money or services, or acquired by lawful inheritance. But all exclusive privileges of trading, or of exercising any calling or handicraft, in corporate towns were abolished. As the act was framed for the reform of existing municipal corporations, it does not apply to the unincorporated towns; but, on the petition of the inhabitant householders of any town not corporate, the crown is empowered to extend the provisions of this important statute by the grant of charters of incorporation.

The mayor is elected from the councillors, and if any one so elected does not choose to serve, he must pay a fine of £100. His qualification is the same as that of a councillor, and if he acts without being duly qualified he is liable to a fine of £50. He presides at the meetings in council, and has precedence in all places within the borough. He revises with his assessors the lists of the constituency, which he must sign in open court. He also presides at the election of councillors. During his year of office he is magistrate for the borough, and also during the succeeding year, and is the returning officer at the election of members of parliament. The aldermen constitute one-third of the number of councillors. They are ineligible for the offices of coroner or recorder, and are exempted from serving on juries. They hold office six years, one-half going out every three years. The town-clerk acts in obedience to the directions of the council. His duties are, besides preserving minutes of the transactions, to make out the freemen's roll, the burgess list, and the ward lists. He is responsible for the safe keeping of all charter deeds and records, and is subject to various fines in case of neglect of duty. The treasurer is appointed by the council, of which he must not be a member, and he must give security for the proper discharge of his duties. He is bound to keep accounts of all receipts and disbursements, which are to be open to the inspection of the members of the council. He is to pay no money except by order in writing, and

is to submit his accounts, with vouchers, half-yearly. This is the list of officers necessarily existing under the Municipal Act, 4 and 5 Wm. IV., c. 76. All advowsons, rights of presentation, or nomination to any benefice or ecclesiastical preferment in the gift of the corporate body, were required to be sold under the direction of the ecclesiastical commissioners, the proceeds to be vested in government securities, and the annual interest carried to the account of the borough fund. The management of charitable trust funds was also taken from the corporations, and placed in the hands of trustees appointed by the lord chancellor.

The need of corporate reform in Ireland was even greater than in England. Corporations were early planted in that country by the English government, as subsidiary institutions connected with the English constitution, which was established at first within the pale, and gradually extended to the whole country, as it became subject to the English power. But whatever independence the Irish corporations may have had originally, it was destroyed by James I., in consequence of the refractory spirit manifested by the municipal bodies in connection with the Reformation, or rather, the supremacy of the crown in matters of religion. He sent his agents through the provinces for the purpose of enforcing the statutes upon this subject, and requiring the regular use of the Book of Common Prayer. Wherever the mayors and other municipal officers did not submit to the king's authority, they were summoned before the royal commissioners, and not only deposed from their offices, but subjected to imprisonment and to heavy fines, for the payment of which their goods were sold by auction in the streets. Pliant tools of the king were substituted in their places. These persons signed away the old constitutional liberties of the towns, delivered up the old charters, and took out new ones. These new charters nominated the mayor, sheriff, recorder, and in many instances, the members of the council, which in no case fairly represented the inhabitants. In this way, by a stroke of arbitrary power, the Irish towns were deprived of their constitutional rights and liberties which they had enjoyed for four hundred years, and this spoliation was inflicted upon them in the name of the protestant religion. This was one of the causes of the little progress that religion made in the country for ages. It appeared to the people in unnatural association with lawless tyranny, high-handed oppression, insolent exclusiveness, and iniquitous monopoly. It was next to impossible that the Reformation could exert any salutary moral influence, while associated with a system which involved such a flagrant violation of civil rights.

The system, however, was somewhat mitigated by what were called the "new rules" issued by the lord lieutenant in council in the year 1672, with the design of encouraging the trade of the towns, which provided that all resident foreigners, strangers, and aliens, being merchants, or skilled in any mystery, craft, or trade, were entitled to their freedom; but they could not, except by special dispensation, fill the higher municipal offices. After the revolution of 1688, these relaxations were wholly disregarded, and a

system of rigid exclusiveness towards Roman catholics everywhere prevailed. In some of the corporate towns no Roman catholics would be suffered to reside within the walls, nor would they be permitted to exercise any handicraft or trade for which a regular apprenticeship was served. The making of an inferior class of shoes, or "*brogues*," was the highest attainment in industrial art permitted to this helot race during those times of unmitigated protestant ascendancy.

The Irish corporations were included in the inquiry, which commenced in 1833. The Irish commissioners took for their local investigations the one hundred and seventeen places which had sent representatives to the Irish

the parliamentary representative was vested in a small self-elected body of freemen; almost invariably the power of nomination was actually possessed by the gentleman known as the "patron" or "proprietor," who could dispose of the seat as he thought proper, and if not reserved for himself or some member of his family, it was sold for the highest price it would bring in the market—treated in every respect as absolute property, which was transmitted, like the family estate, from father to son. This property was fully recognised at the Union, and it was by buying it up at an exceedingly liberal price that lord Castlereagh was enabled to carry that measure. By the act of union, a large number of those rotten corporations, some of which had



LORD MULGRAVE (AFTERWARDS MARQUIS OF NORMANBY).

parliament. They found everywhere the grossest abuses. By an act of George II., residence had been dispensed with as a qualification for corporate offices. The effect of this was to deprive a large number of them of a resident governing body. In some cases a few, very rarely a majority, of the municipal council were inhabitants of the town. In others, the whole chartered body of burgesses were non-resident, and they attended as a mere matter of form, to go through the farce of electing members of parliament, or for the purpose of disposing of the corporate property. In some boroughs the charter gave the nomination of a member of parliament to the lord of the manor or some local proprietor. In others the power of returning

not even a hamlet to represent, were swept away. But a considerable number remained, and of these the commissioners of inquiry remarked:—"This system deserves peculiar notice in reference to your majesty's Roman catholic subjects. In the close boroughs they are almost universally excluded from all corporate privileges. In the more considerable towns, they have rarely been admitted even as freemen, and, with few exceptions, they are altogether excluded from the governing bodies. In some—and among these is the most important corporation in Ireland, that of Dublin—their admission is still resisted on avowed principles of sectarian distinction. The exclusive spirit operates far more widely and more mischievously

than by the mere denial of equal privileges to persons possessing perfect equality of civil worth; for in places where the great mass of the population is Roman catholic—and persons of that persuasion are for all efficient purposes excluded from corporate privileges—the necessary result is that the municipal magistracy belongs entirely to the other religious persuasions; and the dispensation of local justice, and the selection of juries being committed to the members of one class exclusively, it is not surprising that such administration of the law should be regarded with distrust and suspicion by the other and more numerous body.” The commissioners affirmed that the corporations provided no means by which the property, interests, and wishes of the local community might be fairly represented. The corporations had interests, not only distinct from those of the people, but directly adverse. In by far the greater number of the close corporations the persons composing them were merely the nominees of the patron. Those bodies were, therefore, of no service to the community, and even where the abuses were least, they were insufficient and inadequate for the purposes and ends of such institutions. The public distrust in them attached to all their officers and nominees, and the result was a failure of respect and confidence regarding the ministers of justice and the police.

In pursuance of this report, Mr. O’Loughlin, the Irish attorney-general, introduced a bill, early in the session of 1836, for the better regulation of Irish corporations. There still remained, he said, 71 corporations, which included within their territories a population of 900,000, while the number of corporators was only 13,000. Of these, no less than 8,000 were to be found in four of the larger boroughs, leaving only 5,000 corporators for the remaining 67 corporations, containing above 500,000 inhabitants. So exclusive had they been, that, though, since 1792, Roman catholics were eligible as members, not more than 200 had ever been admitted. In Dublin the principle of exclusion was extended to the great majority of protestants of wealth, respectability, and intelligence. In a word, the attorney-general said that the management of corporations, and the administration of justice in their hands, was nothing but a tissue of injustice, partisanship, and corruption. He concluded by laying down a plan of reform which would assimilate the Irish corporations to those of England. “There is only one way,” he said, “in which it is possible to pacify Ireland, and that is to promote a real union, through an amelioration of her institutions—by treating her fairly—by giving her equal privileges and equal rights with England. Deny her that, and the union is at an end.” On the part of the conservatives, it was admitted that the greater part of the corporations in Ireland were created by James I., avowedly as guardians of the protestant interests, and to favour the spread of the protestant religion; and that ancient and venerable system this bill would annihilate—a revolution against which they solemnly protested, even though it covered many abuses which had crept into it during the lapse of time. They were quite appalled at the prospect of the evils that this bill would produce. Borough magistrates were to be elected by popular suffrage.

What a source of discord and animosity! First, there would be the registration of the voters, then the election of the town councillors, and then the election of the mayor, aldermen, and town clerks. What a scene would such a state of things present! How truly was it said that the boroughs would be the normal schools of agitation! Then what was to become of the corporate property, which yielded an income of £61,000, while the expenditure was only £57,000, and the debt charged on it only £133,000? Was all this property to be placed under the control of the priests, whose influence would determine the elections?

The second reading of the bill was not opposed, but lord Francis Egerton, with Sir R. Peel’s concurrence, moved that the committee should be empowered to make provision for the abolition of corporations in Ireland, and for securing the efficient and impartial administration of justice, and the peace and good government of the cities and towns in that country. The tories thought it better that there should be no corporations at all, than that their privileges should be enjoyed by the Roman catholics. The motion was lost by a majority of 307 to 64, and the bill ultimately passed the lower house by a majority of 61. In the upper house a motion similar to that of lord Francis Egerton was moved by lord Fitzgerald, and carried in a full house by a majority of 84. Other amendments were carried, and it was sent back to the commons so changed that it was difficult to trace its identity. Lord John Russell said that it contained little or nothing of what was sent up: out of 140 clauses, 106 had been omitted or altered, and 18 new ones introduced. He moved that the amendments of the lords be rejected, and that the bill be sent back to the upper house. The motion was carried by a majority of 86, the numbers being 324 to 258. But the lords refused by a majority of 99 to undo their work; and upon the bill being returned to the lower house in the same state, lord John Russell got rid of the difficulty by moving that the bill should be considered that day three months. There was some powerful speaking in the house of commons during these debates. Lord Stanley, Mr. O’Connell, and Mr. Sheil especially distinguished themselves by their oratory. Sir Robert Peel paid a generous tribute to the talents of the latter gentleman, saying, “His talents and his eloquence invest all he utters with the charm of a powerful character, and Ireland should be justly proud of his genius.” Lord Lyndhurst’s speech in the upper house was also a great effort, the noble lord having been roused to put forth all his powers by attacks made upon him by lord John Russell, Mr. O’Connell, and Mr. Sheil, whom he assailed with great bitterness. The venerable lord Grey came out from his retirement, and made his appearance in the house in the hope of dissuading the lords from their purpose of defeating the Irish Corporation Reform Bill, but in vain, though not even in 1831 was there a more angry collision between the two houses. Never before, indeed, did the peers show such determination. The desire to exclude the Irish from the benefit of municipal institutions excited a strong feeling against the house of lords, not only in that country, but throughout England and Scotland. Although their object was to lessen the power of O’Connell, their conduct had the effect of making him extremely popular in England.

From all quarters he was receiving testimonials of sympathy, and he got many invitations to public dinners. In Nottingham, in particular, he met with an enthusiastic welcome, although the tories had put out a placard to the effect that he had traduced the women of England. He denounced this assertion as a lie, "the worst sort of a lie, a tory lie." The ladies of Nottingham presented Mrs. O'Connell on this occasion with a lace veil of the most superb character the manufacturers of that town could produce, as a testimony of their estimation of her husband's services in the cause of Ireland, and of admiration of the domestic support and zealous encouragement which she had always given him in his political career, especially in periods of the greatest trial.

There were many public meetings held in England to sustain the claim of the Irish to equal rights as to municipal government. In Ireland, too, the subject caused a general revival of agitation.

But, notwithstanding the hopes which might have been fairly entertained that the measure of reform would have been rendered complete throughout the kingdom, a considerable time elapsed before its benefits were extended to the sister country; and a large amount of persevering exertion was required before a measure for the purpose was carried through parliament, although its necessity was unquestionable. This arose from certain difficulties which it was not found easy to overcome, so as to meet the views, or, at least, to secure the acquiescence, of the various parties in the house. And hence it happened that it was not until 1840 that an act was passed for the regulation of municipal corporations in Ireland, after repeated struggles which had to be renewed from year to year, and the question was at length only settled by a sort of compromise. On the 7th of February, 1837, Lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in the Irish municipal bill, which was passed by a majority of 55; but the consideration of it was adjourned in the peers till it was seen what course ministers were to adopt with regard to the Irish Tithe Bill. Early in 1838 the bill was again introduced, when Sir Robert Peel, admitting the principle by not opposing the second reading, moved that the qualification should be £10. The motion was lost, but a similar one was made in the upper house, and carried by a majority of 60. Other alterations were made, which induced lord John Russell to relinquish his efforts for another year. In 1839 he resumed his task, and the second reading was carried by a majority of 26. Once more, Sir Robert Peel proposed the £10 qualification for the franchise, which was rejected in the commons, but adopted in the lords by nearly the same majorities as before. Thus baffled again, the noble lord gave up the measure for the session. In February, 1840, the bill was introduced by lord Morpeth with a qualification of £8. Sir Robert Peel now admitted that a settlement of the question was indispensable. With his support the bill passed the commons by a majority of 148. It also passed the lords, and on the 18th of August received the royal assent.

The existing corporations were placed in schedules. Schedule A contained the following ten places—Dublin, Belfast, Clonmel, Cork, Drogheda, Kilkenny, Limerick,

Londonderry, Sligo, and Waterford—which were all continued as corporations under the title of mayor, aldermen, and burgesses. In Dublin, the title of lord mayor was retained. Schedule B contained 37 places, which were classed in two divisions, according to the amount of property they possessed. These were all dissolved, but the act provided that any of them which had a population of 3,000 might obtain a charter of incorporation, similar to the charters possessed by the ten boroughs in Schedule A. In some of the others, town commissioners had been established under George IV.; and in other towns, large enough to require such a body, similar arrangements were made for lighting, cleaning, and other such purposes. In 1853 commissioners were appointed under this act in 55 towns; but another statute, the Towns Improvement Act, was passed in 1854, which supersedes the operation of the act of George IV. in each town, after the first election of commissioners under the new act. The number of parliamentary boroughs is 33, which contain about 30,000 electors.

Fortunately, municipal reform in Scotland did not give much trouble. It was accomplished almost without any discussion or party contention. It was based upon the provisions of the Scotch reform bill, which settled the whole matter by the simple rule that the parliamentary electors of every burgh should be the municipal electors; also that the larger burghs should be divided into wards, each of which should send two representatives to the town council, chosen by the qualified electors within their respective bounds; and that the provost and bailies, corresponding to the English mayor and aldermen, should be chosen by the councillors, and invested with the powers of magistrates in the burgh. The functionaries were to be elected for three years, and then to make way for others elected in the same manner to succeed them. They were invested with the control and administration of all corporate property and patronage of every description. "The experience of the working of this change," writes Sir Archibald Alison, "has yet been too short to admit of any safe conclusion being drawn as to its ultimate effects; but hitherto at least it has not promised much in the shape of real amendment. The old close system has been effectually abolished, and the political influence of the town councils, which was always considerable, often great, has been entirely thrown into the liberal scale; but beyond this, no material change for the better has taken place in the administration of the burgh affairs. The debates at the council boards of the great towns have been too often scenes of unseemly contention; the ambition of newly acquired power has evinced all the restlessness and grasping disposition which so often accompanies it; many old abuses have stopped, but many new ones have been introduced. It was soon discovered that the vesting power in several thousand electors did not terminate the sway of cliques, but only caused them to be composed of different persons; and such were the sums often wasted in unprofitable litigation and legislation, that men came to regret the good old times, when a small part of the amount was squandered on the comparatively innocuous system of eating and drinking."*

* Alison's Europe, vol. vi., p. 164.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Agricultural Distress—Financial Statement—Practical Reforms—The Naval Code—The Patent Laws—Work of the Session—Obstructive Action of the House of Lords—Agitation against the Peers—Submissive Attitude of the Commons in presence of the Lords—O'Connell's Agitating Tour in England and Scotland—Enormous Increase of Peers by the Tories, Counterbalanced by the Whigs—Privileges and Immunities of the Order—Committee of Inquiry on Orange Lodges in the Army—Alleged Conspiracy to set aside the Succession of the Princess Victoria, in order to make way for the Duke of Cumberland—Startling Revelations made by the Committee—Commission given by the Duke of Cumberland, as Grand Master of the Orange Society, to organise a Counter-Revolution against the Emancipation Act—The Duke of Wellington charged with playing the part of Cromwell—Plans of the Conspirators—Formidable extent of the Confederation—Mr. Hume's Resolutions on the subject—Colonel Fairman, threatened with Imprisonment for Breach of Privilege, absconds—Proposed Criminal Prosecution of the Duke of Cumberland and the Orange Leaders—Mr. Hume again brings the subject before Parliament, moving for an Address to the King on the Case of the Duke of Cumberland, and calling for the dismissal of all Orange Officials—Amendment of Lord J. Russell carried unanimously—The Orange Society dissolved—Its Revival in Ireland—The Irish Government under Earl Mulgrave—Viceregal "Progress"—Wholesale Liberation of Prisoners—Sir Harcourt Lees—The Statue of King William blown up—General Prosperity of the United Kingdom in the Winter of 1855–56.

SOME attempts were made during the session to induce the house of commons to take up the subjects of the currency and agricultural distress. A motion was made by Mr. Cayley, member for the North Riding of Yorkshire, to appoint a select committee, to inquire whether there were not effectual means within the reach of parliament to afford substantial relief to the agriculture of the United Kingdom, and specially to recommend to the committee the subject of a silver standard, or a conjoined silver and gold one. This motion gave rise to a debate of three nights' duration, but it was rejected by a majority of 216 to 126. Lord Chandos brought forward a motion on the subject of agricultural distress, with a view to the immediate removal of some part of those burdens to which the land was peculiarly subject. This motion was lost by a majority of 211 to 150. On the 14th of August Mr. Spring Rice, the chancellor of the exchequer, made his financial statement. The budget was not so satisfactory as had been anticipated. He had calculated the income of the country at £45,550,000, and the expenditure at £44,715,000. But instead of the surplus which these figures would indicate, not more than about £200,000 could be calculated on after paying the interest of the West Indian loan, which amounted to £1,000,000.

After a lengthened and toilsome session, parliament was at length prorogued by the king in person on the 10th of September. The great work of the session, a work which of itself was of sufficient value to constitute a lasting claim upon the gratitude of the country, was the reform of municipal corporations. It may be regarded as a supplement to parliamentary reform, the natural and necessary complement of that great measure, and therefore the appropriate performance of a liberal administration. But there were several other measures passed effecting improvements of great national importance. Among these were acts for the improvement of the naval code, amending and consolidating the laws relative to merchant seamen, and establishing a registry of all persons engaged in the merchant service, encouraging the voluntary enlistment of

seamen into the royal navy, by limiting the period of service to five years, unless in case of special emergency, when they may be detained six months longer, with one-fourth increase of pay, seamen being allowed to provide substitutes, and entitled to certificates of protection for two years at the expiration of their terms of service. It was thought a hazardous experiment to abolish the prerogative right of naval impressment, but it was expected that the exercise of that obnoxious power would not be necessary except in very rare cases of sudden emergency.

The absurd and antiquated patent laws had long been a subject of complaint, and an impediment in the way of progress in the industrial arts. Lord Brougham applied his active and practical mind to a correction of their more glaring defects. According to the old system, a man might be the author of an important invention, but if any portion of his plan had been previously discovered by another person, though without his knowledge, his claim was invalidated, and he could not obtain a patent. But under the amended law, if a patentee found himself anticipated on any part of his plan, he could drop his claim to that, and obtain a patent for the rest. Thus one man could go on improving upon the work of another, rendering some engine, for example, or piece of machinery more perfect and better adapted to accomplish the original design; so, if an inventor hit upon a plan that had been formerly discovered by somebody else, and it had not been generally known or used, he was not to be debarred from getting a patent. If the right of a patentee was once established before a judge, a certificate to that effect would protect him from future actions. Another great improvement was the power vested in the crown of extending, on the recommendation of the privy council, the term of the patent from fourteen to twenty-one years. Under the old law, a valuable patent often expired just about the time the difficulties attending its first introduction had been surmounted, and it was beginning to be profitable to the inventor, of which the most remarkable illustration was presented in the case of Watt, who was deprived of the benefit of his improvements on the steam engine, which only came into general use when his interest had ceased. Since that time more effective measures have been adopted for encouraging invention by securing patents. By an act of the 15 and 16 Victoria commissioners of patents were appointed, consisting of the lord chancellor, the master of the rolls, the attorney-general for England and Ireland, the lord advocate, and the solicitor-general for England, Ireland, and Scotland. This act was passed in 1852, and since that time a journal has been published under the authority of the commissioners, with indexes of patents from March, 1617, to the present time. Specifications of patents may be consulted by the public at the Free Library and Reading Room in Southampton Buildings, which were established in 1854. In 1859 a museum containing models, portraits, &c., was opened at South Kensington.

Various other legislative improvements were effected during the session, tending to facilitate social progress, the exercise of constitutional rights, and the removal of grievances. For example, acts were passed for establishing a copyright in lectures, for the enforcement of uniformity in

weights and measures, for amending the highway laws, for improving the postal communication with foreign countries, for regulating the conveyance of passengers to our colonies, for limiting the duration of polling at elections to one day in England and Scotland, for abolishing imprisonment for small debts in the latter country, for abolishing capital punishment for the crimes of stealing letters and of sacrilege, for authorising substitution of declarations for oaths in the treasury, in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and in the Bank of England, for the appointment of inspectors of prisons, and for the introduction of greater uniformity of practice in the prison regulations of England and Wales. The number of private bills passed during the session of 1835 was 160, of which 42 related to improvements of towns and districts.

Several important measures which had passed the commons were rejected by the lords. Their resistance had caused great difficulty in carrying through the imperatively demanded measures of municipal reform; and they had deprived the Irish Church Temporalities Act of one of its principal features. But their obstructive action was not confined to great political measures of that kind. They rejected the Dublin police bill, and other measures of practical reform. The consequence was that the liberal party began to ask seriously whether the absolute veto which the lords possessed, and which they sometimes used perversely and even factiously, was compatible with the healthful action of the legislature, and the well-being of the country. It was roundly asserted that the experience of the last two years had demonstrated the necessity of reform in the house of lords. The question was extensively agitated, it was constantly discussed in the press, public meetings were held throughout the country upon it, and numerous petitions were presented to parliament with the same object. On the 2nd of September, Mr. Roebuck, while presenting one of these petitions, announced his intention of introducing early in the next session a bill to deprive the house of lords of its veto upon all measures of legislation, and to substitute for it a suspense of power, so that, if a bill, thrown out by the lords, should pass the commons a second time; and receive the royal assent, it might become law without the concurrence of the peers. Mr. Ripon also gave notice of a motion to remove the bishops from the house of peers; while Mr. Hume indignantly denounced the humiliating ceremonials observed in the intercourse between the commons and the lords. Although the whole proceeding at a conference between the two houses consists of the exchange of two pieces of paper, oral discussions not being permitted, the members of the house of commons are obliged to wait upon the lords, standing with their hats off, the members of the upper house, as if they were masters, remaining seated with their hats on. The state of feeling among the working classes on this subject was expressed in the strongest language in an address to Mr. O'Connell from the "non-franchised inhabitants of Glasgow." They warmly deprecated the unmanly and submissive manner in which the ministers and the commons had bowed bare-headed to the refractory lords. They demanded that responsibility should be established in every department of the state; and they said, "As the house of

lords have hitherto displayed a most astounding anomaly in this enlightened age by retaining the right to legislate by birth or court favour, and being thereby rendered irresponsible, it follows it must be cut down as a rotten encumbrance, or be so cured as to be made of some service to the state, as well as amenable to the people."

Indeed, Mr. O'Connell's agitating tour in the north of England and in Scotland was in effect a crusade against the lords. In a speech which he addressed to an immense assemblage of the working classes of Manchester, he said, if there were only one house of parliament, a majority of that house, perhaps a faction, might become the rulers of the entire nation. He was, therefore, for two houses, but they should be honest and competent. Why should a man be a legislator because his father was one? It was as reasonable to expect that a man would be a good tailor on the hereditary principle. The lords had proved themselves to be arrant botchers in the work of legislation. Were they to have 170 masters of that class? He then proceeded in this strain:—"Will you endure that any gang or banditti, I care not by what name you call them, should treat you contemptuously? In one word, I call them rogues. *We must put down the house of lords.* Ye are miserable minions of power. Ye have no choice for yourselves till that house be thoroughly reformed. Let the king retain his prerogative of raising men to that rank and station to which they may be eligible. Let every 200,000 men in Great Britain and Ireland select one lord from this list; that will give you 120 for the 24,000,000; let them be re-eligible every five years, and you will have a steady chamber."

Such absurd projects of reform were listened to with favour at that time by large numbers of the working classes, in consequence of the way in which a majority of the lords set themselves against the will of the majority of the nation. There was danger to the constitution from this state of things. It was evident that the upper house had not the power of permanently obstructing the course of society, and that by persisting in that attempt it was putting its own existence in peril. The obvious remedy was to save it by bringing it into harmony with the other branch of the legislature, and with society. This lord Melbourne resolved to do by a gradual creation of peers. Indeed, this plan had been in operation for some time; and we find that the number of peers created in the reign of William IV. was not less than fifty-two, of whom thirty were created at his coronation. Numerous additions have been made since that time; but it is admitted by the tories themselves that it was only following the example that had been set during the long period that that party had the ascendancy. At the accession of George III. the peers were only 180; but when Mr. Pitt came into power, in 1784, they had increased to 220; and when the whigs came into office, in 1830, they found that the body had been doubled in half a century, the number of peers then being 410, exclusive of the elected peers of Scotland and Ireland. An overwhelming majority of these were wedded to tory principles; or rather, without troubling their heads with principles, they were animated by the instinct of a dominant and highly privileged order; and it would

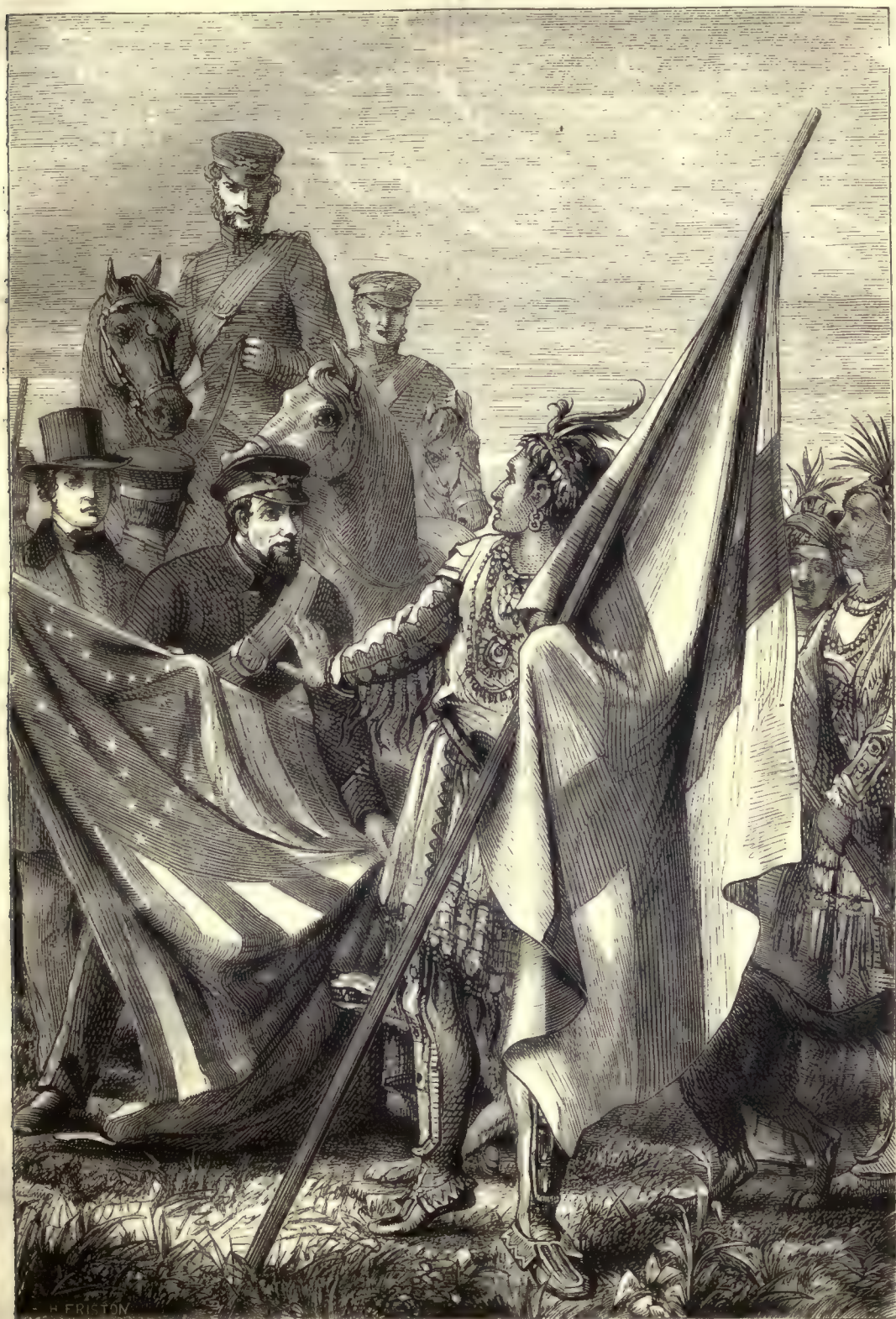
be something miraculous if they did not often indulge in an insolence of tone and manner very offensive to a free people; though it must be confessed that many of the old nobility were models of gentleness, affability, and courtesy, presuming far less upon their rank than new men among the commoners did upon their wealth. Peers and peeresses are free from all arrest in civil actions. In such cases they cannot be outlawed, nor can any attachment lie against their persons. Peers are exempt from serving on juries, from attending courts leet or sheriffs' turns, or, in case of riot, from attending the *posse comitatus*. A peer gives his judgment, not on oath, but on honour, though when examined as a witness he must be sworn. In cases of treason and felony he must be tried by his peers in a court arranged specially for the purpose, usually in the centre of Westminster Hall, at the expense of the crown; and the court is removed as soon as the trial is over. The house of peers, says Sir William Blackstone, is so highly tendered by the law that it is much more penal to spread false reports of them, and certain other great officers of the realm, than of other men; scandal against them being called by the peculiar name of *scandalum magnatum*, and subject to peculiar punishments by divers ancient statutes. This proceeding, however, says Sir Bernard Burke, by writ of *scandalum magnatum*, which is of a civil as well as of a criminal nature, is now almost obsolete, the ordinary modes of obtaining legal redress being generally preferred. Indeed, in a criminal prosecution for *scandalum magnatum*, the defendant would no doubt now be allowed the privileges, and be subject only to the punishments enacted by the recent Libel Act, 6 and 7 Vic., cap. 96. It has been held that words are actionable in the case of a peer which are not so in that of a common person—as to say of a peer, he is an unworthy man, and acts against law and reason. Peers have the privilege of sitting covered in courts of justice during their proceedings; and have also the privilege of voting in parliament by proxy. Peers have the privilege in parliament of wearing robes of scarlet cloth, differentiated from each other by bars of ermine—dukes having four, marquises four on the right side and three on the left, earls three, and viscounts and barons two rows of plain white fur only. By the *curialitas regni*, the eldest son in each degree of created dignity is as of the degree next to his father; and such eldest sons of peers as enjoy a plurality of titles take and use the secondary one by courtesy. All peers carry supporters to their arms, as incidental to their hereditary dignity, and otherwise adorn them exteriorly with their respective coronets and mantles. Selden states that a coronet is first mentioned in the investiture of earls in the time of Edward VI.; but that they were much more ancient appears from the will of Richard, earl of Arundel, dated 5th of December, 1375, in which he bequeaths his three coronets to his son and his two eldest daughters, a circumstance which proves that coronets were carried as ensigns of high nobility in the fourteenth century, but not according to any rule or restriction as to their descent.*

A body so peculiarly privileged ought to be careful not

to assume an attitude of antagonism against the bulk of the nation. Still, the outrageous attacks of Mr. O'Connell gave much offence, and when, on his return to Dublin after his crusade, he was invited to dinner by the lord-lieutenant, a violent storm was raised against the government.

The tory party sustained serious damage in consequence of an inquiry on the subject of Orange lodges in the army, which was granted in May, on the motion of Mr. Finn, an Irish member. Very startling disclosures were made by this committee during Sir Robert Peel's brief administration. Various addresses had been presented from Orange societies, which led to pertinacious questioning of the ministers. It was asked whether the addresses in question purported to be from Orange societies; whether the king ought to receive addresses from illegal associations; and whether it was true, as the newspapers stated, that such addresses had been graciously received by his majesty. There was a peculiar significance given to these inquiries by an impression that began to prevail that there had been on foot for some years a conspiracy to prevent the princess Victoria from ascending the throne, and to secure the sovereignty for the eldest brother of the king, the duke of Cumberland, the avowed head of the tory party, and also the head of the Orange society, through whose instrumentality the revolution was to be effected, in furtherance of which Orange lodges had been extensively organised in the army. The report of the committee was presented in September, and from this report it appeared that Orange lodges were first held in England under Irish warrants; but that in 1808 a lodge was founded in Manchester, and warrants were issued for the holding of lodges under English authority. On the death of the grand master in that town, 1821, the lodge was removed to London, where the meetings were held in the house of lord Kenyon, deputy grand master. The duke of York had been prevented from assuming the office of grand master, because the law-officers of the crown were of opinion that the society was illegal. The act against political associations in Ireland having expired in 1828, the Orange lodges started forth in vigorous and active existence, under the direction of the duke of Cumberland as grand master. The passing of the Emancipation Act seems to have had the effect of driving the leaders of the society into a conspiracy to counteract its operation, or to bring about a counter-revolution by means of this treasonable organisation; though, perhaps, they did not consider it treasonable, as their object was to place upon the throne the brother of the king, whom they thought to be alone capable of preserving the constitution, and of excluding from it a very young princess, who would be during her minority in the hands of whigs and radicals, whom they believed to be leagued together to destroy it. Considering the frenzy of party spirit at this time, and the conditional loyalty openly professed by the men who annually celebrated the battle of the Boyne and the glorious revolution of 1688, there is nothing very surprising in the course adopted by the Orange societies, though the English public were astounded when they learned for the first time, in 1835, that there were 140,000 members of

* Sir Bernard Burke's "Peerage and Baronage," 1863, p. 14.



MAJOR SPRAGUE AND THE INDIANS.

this secret society in England, of whom 40,000 were in London; and that the army was to a large extent tainted.

In 1828, when the duke of Cumberland became grand master, he issued a commission to his "trusty, well-beloved, and right worshipful brother, lieutenant-colonel Fairman," whom he had chosen from a knowledge of his experience and a confidence in his integrity. This commission was signed as follows: "Given under my seal at St. James's, this 13th day of August, 1828. ERNEST G. M." In the fulfilment of his commission, colonel Fairman went to Dublin, in order to bring the Irish and English lodges into one uniform system of secret signs and passwords. He also made two extensive tours in England and Scotland, for the purpose of extending the system through the large towns and populous districts. Colonel Fairman seems to have had unbounded confidence in the success of his mission. In a letter to Sir James Cockburn he gives a glowing account of the numbers and discipline of the Orange societies, and speaks of grovelling worms who dared to vie with the omnipotence of heaven. One of these "worms," it appears, was the duke of Wellington, whom this crazy conspirator accused of a design of seizing upon the throne, saying: "One, moreover, of whom it might ill become me to speak but in terms of reverence, has, nevertheless, been weak enough to ape the coarseness of a Cromwell, thus recalling the recollection to what would have been far better left in oblivion. His seizure of the diadem, with his planting it upon his brow, was a precocious sort of self-inauguration." The following letter was written by Fairman, on the 6th of April, 1830, during the last illness of George IV., and was addressed to the editor of the *Morning Herald*:—

"DEAR SIR,—From those who may be supposed to know 'the secrets of the castle,' the king is stated to be by no manner in so alarming a state as many folks would have it imagined. His majesty is likewise said to dictate the bulletins of his own state of health. Some whisperings have also gone abroad that, in the event of the demise of the crown, a regency would probably be established, for reasons which occasioned the removal of the next in succession from the office of high admiral. That a maritime government might not prove consonant to the views of a military chieftain of the most unbounded ambition, may admit of easy belief; and as the second heir-presumptive is not alone a female, but a minor, in addition to the argument which might be applied to the present case, that, in the ordinary course of nature, it was not to be expected that his reign would be of long duration, in these disjointed times, it is by no means unlikely a vicarious form of government may be attempted. The effort would be a bold one; but, after the measures we have seen, what new violation would surprise us? Besides, the popular plea of economy and expedience might be urged as a pretext, while aggrandisement and usurpation might be the latent sole motive. It would only be necessary to make out a plausible case, which, from the facts on record, there could be no difficulty in doing, to the satisfaction of a pliable and obsequious set of ministers, as also to the success of such an experiment. Most truly yours,

"W. B. F."

The author of this letter was in confidential communication with the duke of Cumberland, and had long conversations with him at Kew in the winter of 1831-32. On the 19th of April in the latter year colonel Fairman was elected to the office of deputy grand secretary, the duke of Buckingham being secretary. He was nominated by the duke of Cumberland, seconded by lord Kenyon, and supported by the duke of Gordon. In June following he was sent forth among the lodges by the grand master as a sort of plenipotentiary. Previously the duke had written to the marquis of Londonderry on the affairs of the society, in consequence of which Fairman wrote with more explicitness, urging the formation of Orange lodges among the pitmen on the estates of the marquis. "Thus," he said, "by a rapid augmentation of our physical force, we might be able to assume a boldness of attitude which should command the respect of our Jacobinical rulers," by which he meant "the Popish cabinet and democratical ministry." He proceeds: "If we prove not too strong for such a government as the present is, such a government will prove too strong for us. Some arbitrary step would be taken in this case to stop our meetings; hence the necessity for our laying aside that non-resistance, that passive obedience, which has hitherto been religiously enforced to our own discomfiture." In another letter he wrote: "We have the military with us as far as they are at liberty to avow their principles and sentiments; but since the lamented death of the duke of York, every impediment has been thrown in the way of holding a lodge."

In reference to the pitmen, the marquis of Londonderry endeavoured, through lord Kenyon, to convince the duke of Cumberland that "the moment had not arrived;" but he stated that he would lose no opportunity of embracing any opening that might arise. From letters written by colonel Fairman at various dates, we gather that he hoped to strike the foe with awe by assuming an attitude of boldness; that they had inculcated the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, "too religiously by far;" that lords Kenyon, Londonderry, Longford, and Cole had written about their prospects in the highest spirits; that in the opinion of lord Wynford, the Tories had not been sufficiently grateful to the duke of Cumberland; that if the duke would make a tour in the country, for which Fairman had prepared the way, he would be idolised; that lord Kenyon had in two years spent nearer £20,000 than £10,000 on behalf of the good cause; that lord Roden wrote to him about "our cause;" that they wanted another "sound paper" as well as the *Morning Post* to advocate the cause—the cause, as they professed, of all the friends of Christianity who devoutly cherished the hope of the arrival of a day of reckoning, when certain "hell-hounds would be called upon to pay the full penalty of their cold-blooded tergiversations." It was found that of 381 lodges existing in Great Britain, 80 were in the army, and that lodges had been established among the troops at Bermuda, Gibraltar, Malta, Corfu, New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, and our North American colonies. Lord Kenyon wrote to the colonel—"His royal highness promises being in England in a fortnight before parliament assembles. To him privately you had better address

yourself about your military proposition, which to me appears very judicious. The statement you made to me before, and respecting which I have now before me particulars from Portsmouth, should be referred to his royal highness as military matters of great delicacy; at the same time, private intimation; I submit, should be made to the military correspondents, letting them know how highly we esteem them as brethren. If you hear anything further from the military districts, let his royal highness know all particulars fit to be communicated." It was in the face of these proofs that the duke of Cumberland and lord Kenyon positively denied all knowledge of the existence of any Orange lodges in the army. But there were still more direct proofs. There were military lodges entered in the books, and noticed by the circular reports of the meetings where the duke of Cumberland presided; and in the laws regulating the lodges there were inducements held out to soldiers by the remission of fees on their behalf, which laws were declared to have been examined and approved by his royal highness. No wonder that the committee remarked in their report that "they found it most difficult to reconcile statements in evidence before them with ignorance of these proceedings on the part of lord Kenyon and his royal highness the duke of Cumberland." The bishop of Salisbury was lord prelate and grand chaplain of the order, and there were a number of clergymen of the church chaplains. No dissenter in England belonged to the body, though it included many presbyterians in Ireland, where the members amounted to 175,000, who were ready at any time to take the field.

Before the report of the committee was presented, Mr. Hume, on the 4th of August, moved eleven resolutions declaring the facts connected with Orangeism, proposing an address to the king, and calling his majesty's attention to the duke of Cumberland's share in those transactions. Lord John Russell, evidently regarding the business as being of extreme gravity, moved that the debate be adjourned to the 11th of August, plainly to allow the duke of Cumberland an opportunity of retiring from so dangerous a connection; but instead of doing so, he published a letter to the chairman of the committee, stating that he had signed blank warrants, and did not know that they were intended for the army. Lord John Russell expressed his disappointment at this illogical course. If what he stated was true, that his confidence was abused by the members of the society in such a flagrant manner, he should have indignantly resigned his post of grand master, but he expressed no intention of doing so. Mr. Hume's last resolution, proposing an address to the king, was adopted, and his answer, which was read to the house, promised the utmost vigilance and vigour. On the 19th the house was informed that colonel Fairman had refused to produce to the committee a letter-book in his possession, and which was necessary to throw light on the subject of their inquiry. He was called before the house, where he repeated his refusal, though admonished by the speaker. The next day an order was given that he should be committed to Newgate for a breach of privilege, but it was then found that he had absconded.

It was now proposed that as the Orange leaders had

violated the law as much as the Dorsetshire labourers, they should be dealt with in the same manner, and that if evidence could be obtained, the duke of Cumberland, lord Kenyon, the bishop of Salisbury, colonel Fairman, and the rest should be prosecuted in the Central Criminal Court. There was an Orangeman, named Heywood, who had betrayed his confederates, and was about to be prosecuted by them for libel. The opponents of the Orangemen, believing his allegations to be borne out by the evidence given before the committee, resolved to have him defended by able counsel, retaining for the purpose serjeant Wilde, Mr. Charles Austen, and Mr. Charles Buller. All the necessary preparations were made for the trial, when Heywood suddenly died, having broken a blood-vessel through agitation of mind, and alarm lest he should somehow become the victim of an association so powerful, whose vengeance he had excited by what they denounced as treachery and calumny. The criminal proceedings, therefore, were abandoned. Almost immediately after the opening of parliament in February, 1836, Mr. Hume again made a statement in the house of commons of the whole case against the duke of Cumberland and the Orange society, and proposed a resolution which seemed but a just consequence of his terrible indictment. The resolution declared the abhorrence of parliament of all such secret political associations, and proposed an address to the king, requesting him to cause the dismissal of all Orangemen and members of any other secret political association from all offices civil and military, unless they ceased to be members of such societies within one month after the issuing of a proclamation to that effect. Lord John Russell proposed a middle course, and moved, as an amendment, an address to the king, praying that his majesty would take such measures as should be effectual for the suppression of the societies in question. Mr. Hume having withdrawn his resolution, the amendment was adopted unanimously. The king expressed concurrence with the commons; a copy of his reply was sent to the duke of Cumberland, as grand master, by the home secretary. The duke immediately sent an intimation that before the last debate in the commons, he had recommended the dissolution of the Orange societies in Ireland, and that he would immediately proceed to dissolve all such societies elsewhere. "In a few days," says a recent writer, "the thing was done, and Orangeism became a matter of history." So it was believed at the time, but Orangeism still lives and flourishes in Ireland, notwithstanding several subsequent enactments for its suppression, prosecutions for violations of those enactments, and a vain attempt made by lord chancellor Brady to deprive members of the society of a commission of the peace. For many years the late viscount Dungannon was grand master, and he has been succeeded this year (1863) by a brother of the marquis of Downshire. The same writer, however, remarks upon the quietness with which the thing was done as one of the most striking features of the case. "The prudence of all parties now appears something unsurpassed in our history. It is the strongest possible evidence of the universal sense of danger in the leaders of all parties. The Orange chiefs had at last become aware of what they had subjected themselves to; yet their forces were so great,

their physical force restrained by no principle, no knowledge, and no sense on the part of the chiefs, that it was not safe to drive them to resentment or despair; and the government had also to consider Ireland, and the supreme importance of leaving a fair field there for trial of their new policy of conciliation under Lord Mulgrave and his coadjutors. The radical reformers in parliament felt this as strongly as the ministers. The great point of the dissolution of Orange societies was gained, and the chiefs of the radical reform party contented themselves with holding out emphatic warnings to the humbled conspirators, whom they held in their power. They let these revolutionary peers know that there were rumours afloat of the reconstitution of Orangeism under another name; that the Orangemen were watched; that the evidence against the leaders was held in readiness for use; that the law which had transported the Dorsetshire labourers could any day be brought to bear upon them; and that no mercy was to be expected if the public safety should require it to be put in operation.*

But whatever may have been the prudence of the chiefs of the party in England, however quietly the suppression of the organisation may have been effected on this side of the Channel, the society was very far from dying quietly, or dying at all in Ireland, its native land. It was stunned for the moment, but very soon recovered all its pristine vigour and became as troublesome as ever. Lord Mulgrave went to that country as viceroy, determined to govern on the principle of strict impartiality between sects and parties, but the Orangemen and the Tories generally denounced him as the most partial and one-sided of viceroys. It was enough for them that O'Connell declared him to be the best Englishman that ever came to Ireland. Eulogy from his lips was the strongest possible censure in the estimation of the opposite party. The violence of party feeling against the government may be inferred from the fact that the recorder of Dublin, Mr. Shaw, one of the ablest and most eloquent of the Protestant chiefs, denounced the Melbourne administration as infidels in religion. Lord Mulgrave, imitating some of the viceroys of old times, made a "progress" of conciliation through the country, first visiting the south and then the north. This progress was signalised by the pardon and liberation of a large number of prisoners, which produced much excitement and clamour against the government. It subsequently appeared that he had during his vice-royalty liberated 822 prisoners, of whom 388 were liberated without advice, the number of memorials which he received being 1,631. Although he evinced his impartiality by setting free all the Orangemen who had been imprisoned in Ulster for taking part in processions on the previous 12th of July, the members of that body were not conciliated. The Dublin grand committee published a manifesto, declaring that the mere will of the king was not law, and that their watchword should still be "no surrender." Sir Harcourt Lees, who had been long famous as an Orange agitator, issuing counter-blasts to O'Connell's letters and speeches, concluded one of his appeals on this occasion thus:—"Orangemen, increase and multiply; be

tranquil, be vigilant. Put your trust in God, still revere your king, and keep your powder dry." In Ulster the organs of the Orange party called upon its members to resist the law against processions, since the provisions of the Emancipation Act against the Jesuits and other religious orders, who treated the law with defiance, were allowed to remain a dead letter. The *Londonderry Sentinel* warned off the liberal viceroy from that citadel of Protestant ascendancy, and said, "If he should come among us, he shall see such a display of Orange banners as will put him into the horrors." The irritation was kept up by various incidents, such as setting aside the election of a mayor of Cork, because he was an Orangeman, setting aside two sheriffs, and the dismissal of constables for the same reason. In the meantime a tremendous outcry was raised on account of the alleged partiality of the Irish government on the subject of patronage. It was said that every office was at the disposal of the Roman Catholics; that from the bench of justice down to the office of police-constable, there was no chance for any one else. In the midst of a war of factions in the spring of 1836, a tremendous sensation was produced by the blowing up of the statue of King William on College Green. On the 8th of February, a little after midnight, this astounding event occurred. The statue stood on a pedestal eighteen feet in height, surrounded by an inclosure of iron railing, the head being about thirty feet from the level of the street. The figure consisted of lead, and though weighing several tons, it was blown up to a considerable height, and fell at some distance from the pedestal. The government and the corporation offered rewards for the discovery of the authors of this outrage, but without success. It was a mystery how such a quantity of gunpowder could have been got into the statue, and how a train could have been laid without detection in so public a place, the police being always on duty on College Green at night. King William, however, was restored to his position, and he has ever since remained undisturbed, but without the provocation of glaring Orange, his colour being toned down into almost neutral bronze, and his pedestal serving the useful purpose of a public drinking fountain, to which the people have recourse without distinction of sect or party, and without even a thought of the Boyne water.

Happily, the prevalence as well as the acerbity of party spirit was restrained by the prosperous state of the country in the winter of 1835-36. There were, indeed, unusual indications of general contentment among the people. Allowing for partial depression in agriculture, all the great branches of national industry were flourishing. The great clothing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire, both woollen and cotton, were all in a thriving condition. Even in the silk trade of Macclesfield, Coventry, and Spitalfields, there were no complaints, nor yet in the hosiery and lace trades of Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester, while the potteries of Staffordshire, and the iron trade in all its branches, was unusually flourishing. Of course, the shipping interest profited by the internal activity of the various manufactures and trades. Money was cheap, and speculation was rife. The farmers, it is true, complained, but their agricultural distress to a certain extent was felt to be chronic. Farming was considered a poor trade, its profits

* "The Thirty Years' Peace," vol. II., p. 278.

on the average, ranging below those of commerce. Most of the farmers being tenants at will, and their rents being liable to increase with their profits, they were not encouraged to invest much in permanent improvements.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Canada—Rapid Increase of its Population and its Wealth—Lower Canada—Upper Canada—Mixture of Races: English and Scotch; Irish; Negroes and Men of Colour; Native Indians—Discontents among the Irish and Roman Catholic Population—Lord Aylmer recalled—Lord Amherst—Lord Gosford's Commission—Stoppage of the Supplies—Grievances—Agency of Mr. Roebuck—Violence of the Democratic Party—Papineau—Sir Francis Head, Governor of Upper Canada—Pacification of the Upper Province—Recall of Lord Gosford—Succeeded as Governor of the Lower Province by Sir J. Colborne.

In 1834 the affairs of Canada got into a very disturbed state, and became a source of trouble for some time to the government in the mother country. To the conflicting elements of race and religion were added the discontents arising from misgovernment by a distant power not always sufficiently mindful of the interests of the colony. For many years after Lower Canada, a French province, had come into the possession of England, a large portion of the country westward—lying along the great lakes—now known as Upper Canada, nearly double the extent of England, was one vast forest, constituting the Indian hunting-ground. In 1791, when by an act of the imperial parliament the colony received a constitution, and was divided into Upper and Lower Canada, with separate legislatures, the amount of the white population in Upper Canada was estimated at 50,000. Twenty years later it had increased to 77,000, and in 1825 emigration had swelled its numbers to 158,000, which in 1830 was increased to 210,000, and in 1834 the population exceeded 320,000, the emigration for the last five years having proceeded at the rate of 12,000 a year. The disturbances which arose in 1834 caused a check to emigration; but when tranquillity was restored, it went on rapidly increasing, till, in 1852, it was nearly a million. The increase of wealth was not less remarkable. The total amount of assessable property, in 1830, was £1,854,965; 1835, £3,407,618; 1840, £4,608,843; 1845, £6,393,630.

Lower Canada was inhabited chiefly by French Canadians, speaking the French language, retaining their ancient laws, manners, and religion, wedded to old customs in agriculture, and stationary in their habits. Of its population, amounting to 890,000 in 1852, nearly three-fourths were of French origin, the remainder being composed of emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland and other countries, while in Upper Canada the number of French was under 27,000. Lower Canada, however, might have been expected to make much more rapid progress from its natural advantages in being much nearer to the sea-board of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and being enabled to monopolise much of the ocean navigation, which terminated at Montreal. Thus, the cities of Quebec and Montreal rose quickly into importance when the upper province began to be settled. In 1827 the cities had each a population of above 27,000; but by the census of 1852 it was found that Quebec had a population of 42,000, and Montreal 57,000. The growth of the towns of Upper Canada has

been still more rapid. In 1817 Toronto, then called Little York, had only 1,200 inhabitants; in 1826 it had scarcely 1,700; but in 1836 it had risen to 10,000. Among the other principal towns of Upper Canada are Hamilton, Kingston, London, and Bytown, which grew rapidly. Situated so near Europe, and offering inexhaustible supplies of fertile and cheap land, with light taxes and a liberal government, it was natural to expect in Upper Canada a very mixed population, and accordingly an analysis of the census of 1852 showed that its inhabitants were composed of people from most of the countries of Europe. The largest single element was composed of Canadians, not of French origin, upwards of half a million; the next of Irish, 176,267; then English, 82,699; Scotch, 75,811; from the United States, 43,732; Germany and Holland, 10,000. Many of those settlers emigrated from the old countries to avoid the pressure of distress, consisting, to a large extent, of the worst paid classes of workmen, such as the hand-loom weavers, that had been cast out of employment by the introduction of machinery. Those persons were now found to be in the enjoyment of independence, as the proprietors of well-cleared and well-cultivated farms, having all the necessities of life in the richest abundance.

Among the elements of the Canadian population we should not forget the African race. These refugees from the tyranny of their taskmasters were generally employed in towns as waiters and barbers, as hewers of wood and railway navvies. But many of them have risen, by intelligence and good conduct, to higher positions in society. The native Indians do not so readily mingle with other races. They prefer dwelling together in settlements of their own, where they enjoy the protection of the government, and are the objects of missionary efforts, attended with considerable success. But the people are indolent, and much addicted to intoxication; and there are tribes of them in the great forests along the shores of Lake Superior, and other distant regions, comparatively beyond the range of civilisation, still chiefly engaged in their primeval pursuits of hunting and fishing, preferring the wild freedom of that mode of existence to the comforts of civilised life. The Red Indians feel grateful for the protection of England, which they call their "great mother across the great waters." Major Sprague, of the United States, has since given an illustration of the existence of this feeling. "Some years ago," said he, "I was engaged in removing some Indians beyond the Mississippi, and one day when encamped I saw a party approaching me. I took my glass, and found they were Indians. I sent out an Indian, with the stars and stripes on a flag, and the leader of the Indians immediately displayed the red cross of St. George! I wanted him to exchange flags, but the savage would not; 'for,' said he, 'I dwell near the Hudson's Bay Company, and they gave me this flag, and they told me that it came from my great mother across the great waters, and would protect me and my wife and children wherever we might go. I have found it to be so, as the white men said, and I will never part with it.'"

Such are the elements which constituted the nucleus of that great nation which has been growing up under the British sceptre in North America. The French and Roman catholic portions of the community could be most

easily excited to disaffection against their protestant governors, and in 1834 the irritation of the popular mind, supposed to be chiefly the work of the clergy, had risen to such a height, that the home government thought it prudent to recall the governor, lord Aylmer, supposing his administration to be the cause of it. Sir Robert Peel appointed lord Amherst as his successor. In one respect, he was not the best that could be selected; for though his antecedents and experience were sufficient to warrant the appointment, the name must have been obnoxious to the priests and people of Lower Canada, as it was by the arms of his uncle, whose title he inherited, that the province had been rescued from France. He had been at one time ambassador to China, and subsequently governor-general of India. He had, however, no opportunity of testing his administrative abilities in this new field, in consequence of Sir Robert Peel's retirement. Lord Melbourne, soon after his restoration to power, in 1835, sent out the earl of Gosford as governor, with a board of commissioners, of which he was chairman, to inquire into the grievances by which the colony was agitated. A bill had been brought into the lower house of assembly for the purpose of rendering the upper house elective, which the government having refused to sanction, the lower house had recourse to the extreme proceeding of stopping the supplies. The salaries of all the public servants ceased to be paid, in consequence of which our colonial secretary authorised the governor to advance £31,000 from the military chest to meet the emergency. The governor having required time to consider the answer he should give under these circumstances, the opposition members all withdrew; and they were so numerous, that they did not leave a quorum to carry on the public business.

It was under these peculiar circumstances that the extraordinary measure was adopted of sending out a commission. It was found that the sense of grievance and the complaints of bad government prevailed in both provinces, though of a different character in each. The *habitants* of the Lower Province complained of the preference shown by the government to the British settlers and to the English language over the French. Englishmen, they said, monopolised the public offices, which they administered with the partiality and injustice of a dominant race. They complained also of the interference of the government in elections, and of its unreasonable delay in considering or sanctioning the bills passed by the assembly. They insisted, moreover, that the upper house, corresponding to our house of peers, should be elective, instead of being appointed by the crown and subject to its will. In the Upper Province the chief grounds of discontent arose from the want of due control over the public money and its expenditure. Many of the electors had gone out from Great Britain and Ireland during the reform agitation, bearing with them strong convictions and excited feelings on the subject of popular rights, and they were not at all disposed to submit to monopoly in the colony of their adoption, after assisting to overthrow it in the mother country. Lord Gosford opened the assembly in November, 1835, and in the course of his speech he said, "I have received the commands of our most gracious sovereign to acquaint you that his majesty is

disposed to place under the control of the representatives of the people all public moneys payable to his majesty or to his officers in this province, whether arising from taxes or from any other source. The accounts which will be submitted to your examination show the large arrears due as salaries to public officers and for the ordinary expenditure of the government; and I earnestly request of you to pass such votes as may effect the liquidation of these arrears, and provide for the maintenance of the public servants, pending the inquiry by the commissioners."

This concession, though considered by the home government a large one, did not satisfy the demands of the province. They took it as an instalment, but gave no pledge to make the return that was sought, by liquidating the arrears. In their answer to the governor they said, "The great body of the people of this province, without distinction, consider the extension of the elective principle, and its application to the constitution of the legislative council in particular; the repeal of the acts passed in Great Britain on matters concerning the internal government of the province, as fully within the jurisdiction of the provincial parliament, as well as the privileges conferred by such acts; and the full and unrestrained enjoyment on the part of the legislature and of this house of their legislative and constitutional rights, as being essential to the prosperity and welfare of his majesty's faithful subjects in Canada, as well as necessary to insure their future confidence in his government, their future contentment under it, and to remove the causes which have been obstacles to it." Mr. Roebuck had become their champion in the British house of commons, and one of their first acts was to insert the agent's bill for the amount of his expenses (£500) in the public accounts. This the government refused to sanction, whereupon the assembly took it upon them to pass it themselves without such sanction. The temper exhibited on both sides in these proceedings indicated anything but a fair prospect of conciliation between the ruler and the ruled. The discontent and agitation went on increasing during the following year. The assembly rose in its demands, still persisting in refusing to vote the supplies. They required that the "executive council" of the governor should be subjected to their control, and that their proceedings should be made public. The assembly, in fact, had become quite refractory, owing to the violent measures of the democratic party, led on by Papineau, the Canadian O'Connell.

The result of the general election in the Upper Province was favourable to the government; for of the 62 members returned, 44 were opposed to the organic changes demanded by the majority of the old assembly. The result was that the government and the legislature of this province were able to work together harmoniously and satisfactorily. This result, however, was said to be obtained by extraordinary, and not always legitimate influence, on the part of the government, and there was a large body of malcontents who joined the Lower Province in its rebellion, which occurred in 1837. The governor of Upper Canada, who brought about this favourable change, was Sir Francis Head, who held the post of major in the army in 1835, when he was employed as assistant poor law commissioner in the county of Kent. Lord Glenelg, then colonial secretary,

recognising in him a man of capacity and energy, fitted for a great emergency, suddenly appointed him governor of Upper Canada. He rendered most important service afterwards in conducting the military operations, by which the rebellion was put down. Lord Gosford was not so successful in the Lower Province. He was accused of having misled the people by holding out false hopes, and both he and the colonial secretary, under whose instructions he acted, were charged with something like treachery, by hinting at great concessions and keeping the word of promise to the ear, for the mere purpose of quieting the agitation and evading the reforms demanded. Lord Gosford, unable to stem the torrent of disaffection, was recalled, in order to make way for Sir J. Colborne. Both these

of Mendicity—Social Habits of the Peasantry—Support of the Poor thrown entirely on the Industrial Classes—Public Opinion in favour of a Legal Relief for the Poor—Subdivision of Land—Excess of Population—A Cycle of Evils—Workhouse Test—Mr. Nicholls's Report the Basis of the Irish Poor Law—The Measure introduced by Lord John Russell—Progress of the Measure in Parliament arrested by the Death of the King.

THE great seal had remained in commission ever since the resignation of Sir Robert Peel, and it was supposed to be reserved for lord Brougham, till the king's objections to his re-appointment should be overcome. But on the 1st of January, 1836, Sir Charles Pepys, master of the rolls, was appointed to the office of lord chancellor, and created a peer by the title of lord Cottenham. At the same time Mr. Henry Bickersteth, appointed master of the rolls, was



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governors rendered the most important service in putting down the rebellion which soon after broke out, and effecting the pacification and union of the provinces, which, as we shall hereafter see, were placed upon the solid basis of self-government and equal rights.

CHAPTER XXX.

Condition of the Poor in Ireland—Sir George Nicholls's History of the Irish Poor Law—Hereditary Vagrancy and Social Disorder—Commission of Inquiry; its Reports—Existing Provision for the relief of the Poor—Enormous amount of Destitution—Remedies proposed—The Voluntary System—Dissentient Commissioners, Mr. Bicheno and Mr. Cornewall Lewis—Recommendation on the subject in the King's Speech—Three Poor Law Bills introduced—Mr. Poulett Scrope—Lord Morpeth—Mr. Nicholls's Mission to Ireland; his Instructions; his Inquiries—Signs of National Improvement—Demoralising Effects

called to the upper house by the title of baron Langdale. Parliament was opened by the king in person on the 4th of February, in a speech remarkable for the number and variety of its topics. It gave the usual assurances of the maintenance of friendly relations with all foreign powers—expressed regret at the continuance of the civil contest in the northern provinces of Spain, and hope of a successful result to our mediation between France and the United States. Referring to domestic affairs, the state of commerce and manufactures was declared to be highly satisfactory; but difficulties continued to press on agriculture. Measures were to be submitted for increasing the efficiency of the church, for the commutation of tithes, for alleviating the grievances of dissenters; and improvements in

the administration of justice were recommended, especially in the court of chancery. The special attention of parliament was directed to the condition of the poor of Ireland, and it was suggested that as experience had proved the salutary effect of the Poor Law Amendment Act in England, a similar measure might be found useful in alleviating the social condition of Ireland. Allusion was also made to the reform of Irish corporations, and the adjustment of the Irish tithe question, which we have already disposed of in the preceding pages. Chiefly with reference to these questions, amendments to the address were moved in both houses; in the upper by the duke of Wellington, whose amendment was carried without a division; and in the lower by Sir Robert Peel, whose motion was rejected by a majority of 284 against 243.

On the 8th of February lord John Russell brought forward the paragraph of the speech relating to agricultural distress, and moved for a select committee to inquire into the causes of the depression of the agricultural interest, although he confessed that he did not anticipate any satisfactory result from the investigation. In this the noble lord did not miscalculate, for after sitting for eight months, the committee could not agree to any report, and all the benefit they conferred upon the public was an outline of the evidence which was laid before the house at the end of the session. On the 9th and the 12th the same minister submitted three measures to the house, which were passed into law this session—namely, a bill for the commutation of tithes in England; a bill for a general registration of marriages, births, and deaths; and another for the amendment of the law of marriage. On the 16th of this month Mr. Hardy brought before the house of commons the case of Mr. O'Connell and Mr. Raphael. The latter gentleman was one of the sheriffs of London, and he wished to represent an Irish constituency. Mr. O'Connell thought it was possible to get him in for the borough of Carlow; but he warned him that the expenses would be £2,000, and that this sum should be deposited in bank as a preliminary, "say £2,000." It was alleged that this was a corrupt bargain, and Mr. O'Connell was accused of selling a parliamentary seat. Mr. Hardy, therefore, moved for a select committee to investigate the transaction. The committee was obtained, and the result was a complete acquittal of Mr. O'Connell.

Attention was now turned to a matter of the highest importance, in a commercial, an intellectual, and a moral point of view. The stamp duty on newspapers had been the subject of keen agitation for some months, and newspaper vendors had incurred repeated penalties for the sale of unstamped newspapers; some of them having been not only fined, but imprisoned. A general conviction prevailed that such an impost was impolitic, if not unjust, and that the time had come when the diffusion of knowledge must be freed from the trammels by which it had been so long restrained. It is certain that the expenses of government must be borne by the governed; and it is a subject of interesting inquiry whether this should be accomplished by direct or indirect taxation, or in what proportion by both: but there can be no question that it should be effected in the way least calculated to oppress the payer,

and, above all, least likely to impede his progress in the improvement of his condition. It is clear that any taxation which acts as a hindrance to commercial, intellectual, or moral progress must be highly objectionable, since, in reality, a far greater sacrifice is made than is represented by the sum which is actually contributed. Numerous excise regulations of former times were mischievous in this way; they placed the greatest obstacles in the path of the manufacturer, prevented him from making the experiments which were necessary to bring his product to perfection, and tied him down to a system of manipulation which, in many cases, was the very worst that could have been selected. Many, but not all, of these incongruities have been got rid of, by a more correct knowledge of the principles of political economy. The evil of unwise interference becomes yet more serious when the mischief is done, not merely to the commercial prosperity, but to the moral and intellectual condition of the country; and this occurs to its fullest extent when the taxation imposed presses upon those manufactures which are indispensable to moral and intellectual improvement, or impedes the diffusion of knowledge. The former is evidently the effect of a duty on paper, and the latter of requiring that newspapers should be stamped. The immediate loss to the revenue was long a great obstacle to the removal of even the most obnoxious taxation; but it was ultimately found that, from causes which are now obvious enough, such diminution always results, at no distant period, in augmenting the income of the state; and still further experience showed that the total removal of a mischievous impost not only increases the commercial wealth, and therefore the ability to meet the legitimate demands of the government, but indirectly augments the very revenue itself. And so important is every circumstance connected with the levying of taxes, that not only their amount, but the mode of collecting them may seriously affect the results. Hence, when, about the commencement of the present century, the duty on paper was divided into *three*, instead of *seven* classes, the increase in the quantity manufactured became so considerable that the amount received by the excise was very soon six times, and ultimately twenty times as great as it had ever been before. But that diminution of the duty of which we are to speak presently gave an immense impetus to the manufacture, and, by increasing the number of hands employed, not only in the paper-mills themselves, but also in those branches of trade which were indirectly affected, added immensely to our commercial prosperity. The increase of our wealth was, however, only a small part of the benefit conferred by a wise legislation in this matter; much more has been gained by the greater facilities for obtaining a sound moral and religious education enjoyed at present. The wide diffusion of useful knowledge was rendered easy, by the concession now made by parliament, in the spirit that led immediately to a diminution of the duty on paper, without which any other boon must be of very limited advantage. A deputation, consisting of Dr. Birkbeck, Mr. Hume, colonel Thompson, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Grote, Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Buckingham, having, on the 11th of February, waited upon lord

Melbourne, to ask for an entire abolition of the stamp on newspapers, he promised to give his most serious attention to the matter; and he kept his word, for on the 15th of the next month the chancellor of the exchequer brought the subject before parliament, and announced the intentions of government with regard to it. He stated that it was proposed to revise the whole of the existing law respecting stamp duties, first by consolidating into one statute the 150 acts of parliament over which the law was at present distributed; secondly, by the apportionment of the various rates on a new principle—namely, by the simple and uniform rule of making the price of the stamp in every case correspond to the pecuniary value involved in the transaction for which it is required. The effect of this change would be to reduce the stamp duty upon indentures of apprenticeship, bills of lading, and many others of the more common instruments, and to increase it upon mortgages and conveyances of large amounts of property. It was intimated that the proposed consolidation act would contain no less than 330 sections. With regard to the stamp on newspapers, then fourpence with discount, it was proposed to reduce it to one penny without discount. This would be a remission of a proportion, varying according to the price of the newspaper, of between two-thirds and three-fourths of the tax. To this remission parliament assented, and the illicit circulation of unstamped papers was in consequence abandoned. Some of the members very reasonably objected to any stamp whatever on newspapers; but the time was not yet come when government would venture entirely to remove it, although the advantages which must necessarily arise from such a proceeding could not but have been foreseen. It was considered unfair that the public at large should pay for the carriage of newspapers by post; but it does not seem to have been remembered that, as only a portion of them would be transmitted in this way, an injustice would be committed by demanding payment for all. The difficulty of the case was, however, in due time, easily surmounted; and political knowledge was, by the change even then made, in a great degree exempted from taxation—a good preparation for the time, which was not very far off, when a newspaper of a high order might be obtained, even for the reduced price of the stamp. This was the only part of the scheme of the chancellor of the exchequer which was now carried into effect; but the advantages which resulted soon became evident, since the circulation of newspapers became four times as great as it had been, even taking into account the increase in the population. The wonderful effects produced by the total removal of the duty on paper, and of the stamp on newspapers, will be noticed at the proper time, but they may be easily anticipated.

The condition of the Irish poor, and the expediency of a state provision for their support, had long been a subject of anxious consideration with the imperial government and the legislature, and also with public men of every party who took an interest in the state of the country. It was at length resolved that something should be done for their regular relief. Sir George Nicholls has shown, in his valuable history of the Irish poor law, that as early as 1310 the Irish parliament assembled at Kilkenny resolved that

none should keep Irish, or kern, in time of peace to live upon the poor of the country; "but those which will have them shall keep them at their own charges, so that the free tenants and farmers be not charged with them." And 130 years afterwards, the parliament assembled in Dublin declared that divers of the English were in the habit of maintaining sundry thieves, robbers, and rebels, and that they were to be adjudged traitors for so doing, and suffer accordingly. In 1450, this class of depredators having increased very much, and by their "thefts and manslaughters caused the land to fall into decay, and poverty wasting it every day more and more; whereupon it was ordained that it should be lawful for every liege man to kill or take notorious thieves, and thieves found robbing, spoiling, or breaking houses; and that every man that kills or takes any such thieves, shall have one penny of every plough, and one farthing of every cottage within the barony where the manslaughter is done for every thief." These extracts show a very barbarous state of society, but Sir George Nicholls remarks that at the same period the condition of England and Scotland was very similar, save only that that of Ireland was aggravated by the civil conflicts between the colonists and the natives. There was a constant effort made in Ireland by various enactments to put down this evil, and to provide employment for the large numbers that were disposed to prey upon the industry of their neighbours, by robbery, beggary, and destruction of property. There was indeed always in Ireland a large number of vagrants, called in the old times "cosherers and idle wanderers," including a number of "young gentlemen" who would not apply themselves to labour or honest industry, but lived idly and inordinately, "coshering" upon the country with their horses and greyhounds, and preying upon the poor farmers, drinking, and gambling. So that the evils that have been complained of so much in modern times are of long standing, deep-rooted in the natural disposition of many of the people, and therefore with difficulty eradicated. Vagabonds and strolling beggars were always a large class of the community, and the impoverished condition of the industrious classes, thus preyed upon, was not a matter for surprise. The wonder, indeed, is that society could have existed at all under such circumstances. For a series of years inquiry after inquiry had been instituted by commissions and committees with a view to devise means of amelioration, but without leading to any satisfactory result. At the close of 1835 there had been a poor law commission in existence for more than two years, consisting of men specially selected on account of their fitness for the task, and standing high in public estimation, including the protestant and Roman catholic archbishop of Dublin. They were appointed, in September, 1833, "to inquire into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, and into the various institutions at present established by law for their relief, and also whether any and what further remedial measures appear to be requisite to ameliorate the condition of the Irish poor or any portion of them." In July, 1835, they made their first report, in which they refer to the various theories with which they were assailed in the course of their inquiries. "One party attributed all the poverty and wretchedness of the country to an asserted extreme

use of ardent spirits, and proposed a system for repressing illicit distillation, for preventing smuggling, and for substituting beer and coffee. Another party found the cause in the combinations among workmen, and proposed rigorous laws against trades unions. Others, again, were equally confident that the reclamation of the bogs and waste lands was the only practical remedy. A fourth party declared the nature of the existing connection between landlord and tenant to be the root of all the evil. Pawnbroking, redundant population, absence of capital, peculiar religious tenets and religious differences, political excitement, want of education, the mal-administration of justice, the state of prison discipline, want of manufactures and of inland navigation, with a variety of other circumstances, were each supported by their various advocates with earnestness and ability, as being either alone, or conjointly with some other, the primary cause of all the evils of society; and loan-funds, emigration, the repression of political excitement, the introduction of manufactures, and the extension of inland navigation, were accordingly proposed each as the principal means by which the improvement of the country could be promoted."

In consequence of the difficulty of getting impartiality combined with local information, the commissioners determined to unite in the inquiry "a native of Great Britain with a resident native of Ireland." They were very slow in their investigations, and complaints were made in parliament and by the public of the time and money consumed in the inquiry. In the early part of 1836 they made a second report, in which they gave an account of the various institutions that had been established for the relief of the poor, such as infirmaries, dispensaries, fever hospitals, lunatic asylums, foundling hospitals, houses of industry, the total charge of which amounted to about £205,000, of which £50,000 consisted of parliamentary grants, the remainder being derived from grand jury presentments, voluntary contributions, and other local sources. This second report, which added little or nothing to the knowledge of the public on the subject, and suggested no general plan for the relief of the poor, was by no means satisfactory to the public. Mr. Nicholls was then a member of the English poor law commission; and the state of the Irish poor being pressed upon his attention, he prepared for the consideration of government a series of suggestions, founded upon a general view of social requirements and upon his experience of the English poor law, coupled with the evidence appended to the Irish commissioners' first report. These suggestions were presented to lord John Russell, in January, 1836, about the same time as the commissioners' second report. In due time that body published their third report, containing the general results of their inquiry upon the condition of the people, which may be summed up as follows:—There is not the same division of labour which exists in Great Britain. The labouring class look to agriculture alone for support, whence the supply of agricultural labour greatly exceeds the demand for it, and small earnings and wide-spread misery are the consequences. It appeared that in Great Britain the agricultural families constituted little more than a fourth, whilst in Ireland they constituted about

two-thirds of the whole population; that there were in Great Britain, in 1831, 1,055,982 agricultural labourers; in Ireland, 1,131,715, although the cultivated land of Great Britain amounted to about 34,250,000 acres, and that of Ireland only to about 14,600,000. So that there were in Ireland about five agricultural labourers for every two that there were for the same quantity of land in Great Britain. It further appeared that the agricultural progress of Great Britain was more than four times that of Ireland; that agricultural wages varied from sixpence to one shilling a day; that the average of the country is about eightpence-halfpenny; and that the earnings of the labourers come, on an average of the whole class, to from two shillings to two and sixpence a week or thereabouts for the year round. Thus circumstanced, the commissioners observed, "It is impossible for the able-bodied in general to provide against sickness or the temporary absence of employment, or against old age, or the destitution of their widows and children in the contingent event of their own premature decease. A great portion of them are, it is said, insufficiently provided with the commonest necessities of life. Their habitations are wretched hovels, several of a family sleep together on straw, or upon the bare ground, sometimes with a blanket, sometimes even without so much to cover them; their food commonly consists of dry potatoes, and with these they are at times so scantily supplied, as to be obliged to stint themselves to one spare meal in the day. There are even instances of persons being driven by hunger to seek sustenance in wild herbs. They sometimes get a herring or a little milk, but they never get meat except at Christmas, Easter, and Shrovetide. Some go in search of employment to Great Britain during the harvest, others wander through Ireland with the same view. The wives and children of many are occasionally obliged to beg; but they do so reluctantly and with shame, and in general go to a distance from home, that they may not be known. Mendicity, too, is the sole resource of the aged and impotent of the poorer classes in general, when children or relatives are unable to support them. To it, therefore, crowds are driven for the means of existence, and the knowledge that such is the fact leads to an indiscriminate giving of alms, which encourages idleness, imposture, and general crime." Such is described as being the condition of the great body of the labouring classes in Ireland; "and with these facts before us," the commissioners say, "we cannot hesitate to state that we consider remedial measures requisite to ameliorate the condition of the Irish poor. What those measures should be is a question complicated, and involving considerations of the deepest importance to the whole body of the people, both in Ireland and Great Britain." The commissioners state that they "cannot estimate the number of persons out of work and in distress during thirty weeks of the year at less than 585,000, nor the number of persons dependent upon them at less than 1,800,000, making in the whole 2,385,000. This, therefore," it is added, "is about the number for which it would be necessary to provide accommodation in workhouses, if all who required relief were there to be relieved;" and they consider it impossible to provide for such a multitude, or even to attempt it with safety. The expense of erecting and fitting up the necessary

buildings would, they say, come to about £4,000,000; and, allowing for the maintenance of each person twopence-half-penny only a-day (that being the expense at the mendicity establishment of Dublin), the cost of supporting the whole 2,985,000 for thirty weeks would be something more than £5,000,000 a-year; whereas the gross rental of Ireland (exclusive of towns) is estimated at less than £10,000,000 a-year, the net income of the landlords at less than £6,000,000, and the public revenue is only about £4,000,000. They could not, therefore, recommend the present workhouse system of England as at all suited to Ireland. "With such feelings," the commissioners observe, "and considering the redundancy of labour which now exists in Ireland, how earnings are kept down by it, what misery is thus produced, and what insecurity of liberty, property, and life ensues, we are satisfied that enactments calculated to promote the improvement of the country, and so to extend the demand for free and profitable labour, should make essential parts of any law for ameliorating the condition of the poor. And for the same reasons, while we feel that relief should be provided for the impotent, we consider it due to the whole community, and to the labouring class in particular, that such of the able-bodied as may still be unable to find free and profitable employment in Ireland should be secured support only through emigration, or as preliminary to it. Those who desire to emigrate should be furnished with the means of doing so in safety, and with intermediate support, when they stand in need of it, at emigrants' depôts. It is thus and thus only that the market of labour in Ireland can be relieved from the weight that is now upon it, or the labourer be raised from his present prostrate state."

Long quotations are then given from the several reports of the assistant commissioners, showing that the feelings of the suffering labourers in Ireland are also decidedly in favour of emigration. They do not desire workhouses, it is said, but they do desire a free passage to a colony, where they may have the means of living by their own industry. The commissioners then declared that, upon the best consideration they have been able to give to the whole subject, they think that a legal provision should be made and rates levied for the relief and support of curable as well as incurable lunatics, of idiots, epileptic persons, cripples, deaf and dumb, and blind poor, and all who labour under permanent bodily infirmities; such relief and support to be afforded within the walls of public institutions; also for the relief of the sick poor in hospitals and infirmaries, and convalescent establishments; or by extern attendance, and a supply of food as well as medicine, where the persons to be relieved are not in a state to be removed from home; also for the purpose of emigration, for the support of penitentiaries—to which vagrants may be sent—and for the maintenance of deserted children; also towards the relief of aged and infirm persons, of orphans, of helpless widows, and young children, of the families of sick persons, and of casual destitution.

This report was not signed by all the commissioners. Three of them set forth their reasons, in thirteen propositions, for dissenting from the principle of the voluntary system, as recommended by the report. These were Dr. Vignoles, Mr. Napier, and Lord Killeen. There was,

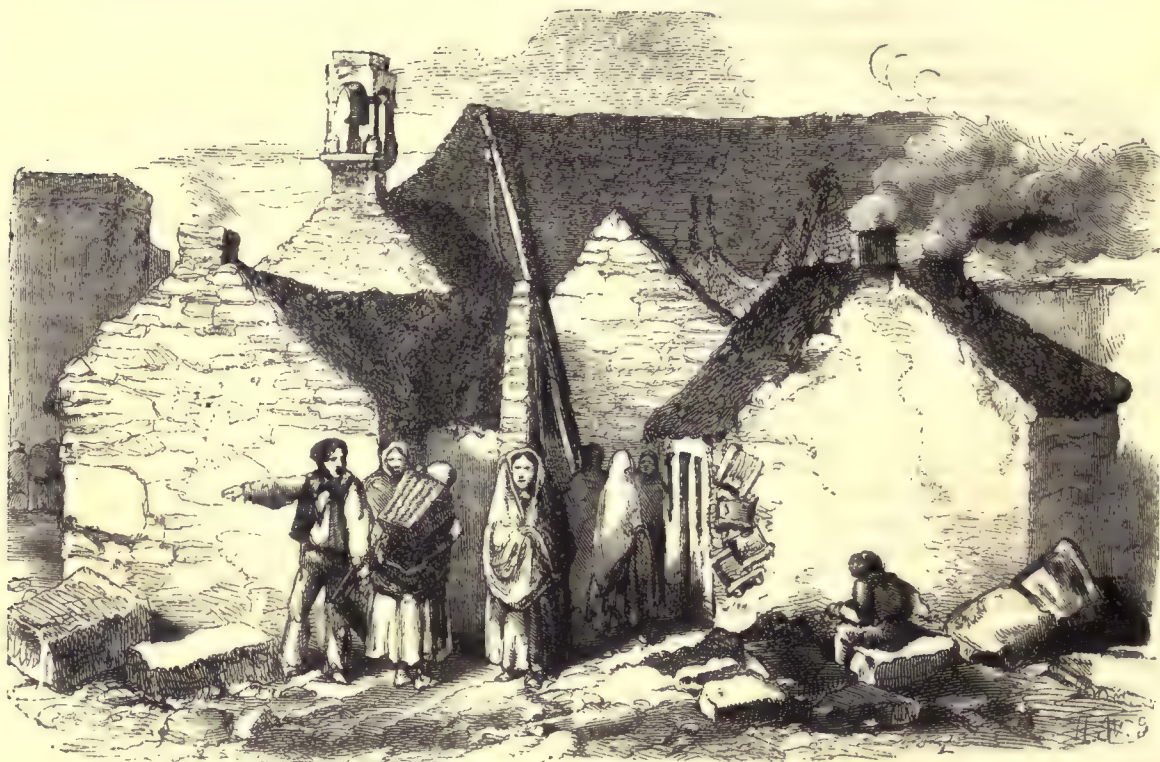
besides, a document published by another commissioner, Mr. Bicheno, expressing his peculiar views, the concluding paragraph of which indicates the spirit of his remarks; it is as follows:—"After all the assistance that can be extended to Ireland by good laws, and every encouragement afforded to the poor by temporary employment of a public nature, and every assistance that emigration and other modes of relief can yield, her real improvement must spring from herself, her own inhabitants, and her own indigenous institutions, irrespective of legislation and English interference. It must be of a moral nature: the improvement of the high and the low, the rich and the poor. Without this, her tenantry will be still wretched, and her landlords will command no respect; with it, a new face will be given to the whole people." Another paper, entitled "Remarks on the Third Report of the Irish Poor Inquiry Commissioners," was submitted to government shortly after the delivery of that report. It was dated in July, 1836, and was drawn up by George Cornewall Lewis, Esq., who had been one of the assistant commissioners for prosecuting the inquiry in Ireland. The objections to the system, or rather the several systems of relief, recommended by the commissioners, are stated by Mr. Lewis with great force and clearness; and he comes to conclusions on the whole question very similar to those contained in the "Suggestions" which had been submitted by Mr. Nicholls, in the month of January preceding. He proposed to apply the principle of the amended English poor law to Ireland, including the workhouse, with regard to the rejection of which by the commissioners he remarks, "As the danger of introducing a poor law into Ireland is confessedly great, I can conceive no reason for not taking every possible security against its abuse. Now, if anything has been proved more decisively than another, by any operation of the Poor Law Amendment Act in England, it is that the workhouse is an all-sufficient test of destitution, and that it is the only test; that it succeeds as a mode of relief, and that all other modes fail. Why, therefore, this tried guarantee against poor law abuses is not to be employed, when abuses are, under the best system, almost inevitable, it seems difficult to understand. If such a safeguard were to be dispensed with anywhere, it would be far less dangerous to dispense with it in England than in Ireland."

At the opening of the session of 1836, as we have seen, the king stated in his speech that a further report of the commission of inquiry into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland would be speedily laid before parliament. "You will approach this subject," he said, "with the caution due to its importance and difficulty; and the experience of the salutary effect produced by the act for the amendment of the laws relating to the poor in England and Wales may in many respects assist your deliberations." On the 9th of February Sir Richard Musgrave moved for leave to bring in a bill for the relief of the poor in Ireland in certain cases, stating that he himself lived in an atmosphere of misery, and being compelled to witness it daily, he was determined to pursue the subject, to see whether any and what relief could be procured from parliament. A few days later another motion was made

by the member for Stroud for leave to introduce a bill for the relief and employment of the poor of Ireland; and on the 3rd of March a bill was submitted by Mr. Smith O'Brien, framed upon the principles of local administration by bodies representing the ratepayers, and a general central supervision and control on the part of a body named by the government, and responsible to parliament. On the 4th of May Mr. Poulett Scrope, a gentleman who had given great attention to questions connected with the poor and the working classes, moved a series of resolutions affirming the necessity for some provision for the relief of the Irish poor. The present earl of Carlisle, who has been for a long period lord-lieutenant of Ireland, was then chief secretary; and in commenting upon those resolutions in

what to do, with such conflicting testimony on a subject of enormous difficulty.

In order to get, if possible, more reliable information and a clue out of the labyrinth, they gave directions to Mr. Nicholls to proceed to Ireland, taking with him the reports of the commissioners of inquiry, and there to examine how far it might be judicious or practicable to offer relief to whole classes of the poor; whether of the sick, the infirm, or orphan children; whether such relief might not have the effect of promoting imposture without destroying mendicity; whether the condition of the great bulk of the poorer classes would be improved by such a measure; whether any kind of workhouse could be established which should not give its inmates a superior degree of comfort to



COTTAGES OF THE PEASANTRY IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.

the house of commons, he admitted "that the hideous nature of the evils which prevailed amongst the poorer classes in Ireland called earnestly for redress, and he thought no duty more urgent on the government and on parliament than to devise a remedy for them." On the 9th of June following, on the motion for postponing the consideration of Sir Richard Musgrave's bill, lord Morpeth again assured the house that the subject was under the immediate consideration of government, and that he was not without hope of their being enabled to introduce some preparatory measure in the present session; but, at all events, they would take the first opportunity in the next session of introducing what he hoped to be a complete and satisfactory measure. Nothing, however, was done during the session, the government seeming to be puzzled to know

the common lot of the independent labourer; whether the restraint of a workhouse would be an effectual check to applicants for admission; and whether, if the system were once established, the inmates would not resist by force the restraints which would be necessary. He was further to inquire by what machinery the funds necessary for carrying out a poor-law system could be best raised and expended. He was dispensed from inquiring as to the extent and the occasional severity of the destitution, though he properly questioned the estimate of 2,385,000 as being excessive, and it was no doubt a great exaggeration. On this point, Mr. Nicholls thought it enough to state at the end of his mission that the misery prevalent among the labouring classes in Ireland appeared to be "of a nature and intensity calculated to produce great demoralisation and

danger." His first report was delivered on the 15th of November, the same year. His attention had been particularly directed to the south and west, "everywhere examining and inquiring as to the condition of the people, their character and wants; and endeavouring to ascertain whether, and how far, the system of relief established in England was applicable to the present state of Ireland." The route from Cork round by the western coast, and

made in former parts of this history as to the growing improvement of Ireland. His investigations and inquiries led him to this conviction. It was impossible, he said, to pass through the country without being struck with the evidence of increasing wealth everywhere apparent. Great as had been the improvement in England during the same period, he believed that in Ireland it had been equal. The increase of capital was steadily progressive. The great



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ending at Armagh, was deemed most eligible, because the inhabitants of the manufacturing and commercial districts of the north and east more nearly resembled the English than those of the southern and western parts of Ireland; and if the English system should be found applicable to the latter, there could be no doubt of its applicability to the others. There could scarcely be selected a more competent person to conduct this inquiry, and it is satisfactory to remark that his testimony fully bears out the statements

obstacles to its more general application to the improvement of the country were the excessive subdivision of land, and the dependence of the people for subsistence upon the possession of a plot of potato-ground. One of the most striking circumstances resulting from the want of employment was the prevalence of mendicancy, with the falsehood and fraud which formed part of the profession, and which spread its contagion among the lower orders. "A mass of filth, nakedness, and equalor was thus kept

moving about the country, entering every house, addressing itself to every eye, and soliciting from every hand; and much of the filth and indolence observable in the cabins, clothing, and general conduct of the peasantry may, I think, be traced to this source, and I doubt even if those above the class of labourers altogether escape the taint. Mendicancy and filth have become too common to be disgraceful."

Mr. Nicholls found that the Irish peasantry had generally an appearance of apathy and depression, seen in their mode of living, their habitations, their dress and conduct; they seem to have no pride, no emulation, to be heedless of the present, and careless of the future. They did not strive to improve their appearance or add to their comforts; their cabins were slovenly, smoky, dirty, almost without furniture, or any article of convenience or common decency. The woman and her children were seen seated on the floor, surrounded by pigs and poultry; the man lounging at the door, which could be approached only through mud and filth; the former too slatternly to sweep the dirt and offal from the door, the latter too lazy to make a dry footway, though the materials were close at hand. If the mother were asked why she did not keep herself and her children clean with a stream of water running near the cabin, her answer invariably was—"Sure, how can we help it? we are so poor." The husband made the same reply, while smoking his pipe at the fire, or basking in the sunshine. Mr. Nicholls rightly concluded that poverty was not the sole cause of this state of things; he found them also remarkable for their desultory and reckless habits. Though their crops were rotting in the fields from excessive wet, and every moment of sunshine should be taken advantage of, yet if there was a market, a fair, or a funeral, a horse-race, a fight, or a wedding, forgetting everything else, they would hurry off to the scenes of excitement. Working for wages was rare and uncertain, and hence arose a disregard of the value of time, a desultory, sauntering habit without industry or steadiness of application. "Such," says Mr. Nicholls, "is too generally the character and such the habits of the Irish peasantry; and it may not be uninteresting to mark the resemblance which these bear to the character and habits of the English peasantry in the pauperised districts, under the abuses of the old poor law. Mendicancy and indiscriminate almsgiving have produced in Ireland results similar to what indiscriminate relief produced in England—the like reckless disregard of the future, the like idle and disorderly conduct, and the same proneness to outrage having then characterised the English pauper labourer, which are now too generally the characteristics of the Irish peasant. An abuse of a good law caused the evil in the one case, and a removal of that abuse is now rapidly effecting a remedy. In the other case the evil appears to have arisen rather from the want than the abuse of a law; but the corrective for both will, I believe, be found to be essentially the same."

There was then no test of destitution in Ireland. The mendicant, whether his distress was real or fictitious, claimed and received his share of the produce of the soil in the shape of charity before the landlord could receive his portion in the shape of rent. The burden fell almost ex-

clusively upon the lower classes, while the higher classes, by means of their jealously guarded gates, and their vigilant watch-dogs, which scented a beggar at a distance, generally escaped. Some people apprehended that the cost of maintaining the poor would swallow up the property of the country, founding their conclusions on the abuses which prevailed in England under the old poor law; but Mr. Nicholls found everywhere, after quitting Dublin, a strong feeling in favour of property being assessed for the relief of the indigent; and he came to the conclusion, as the result of his inquiries, aided by his English experience, that a judicious poor law system might be safely and beneficially established in Ireland. But it must not be expected to work miracles; it would not give employment or capital, but it would help the country through what might be called its "transition periods"—that season of change from the system of small holdings, *con acre*, and the minute subdivision of land, to the better practice of day labour for wages. The eager clinging to land and its subdivision into small holdings was at once a cause and a consequence of the rapid increase of the people, and of the extreme poverty and want which prevailed among them. It was not because the potato constituted their food that a kind of famine occurred annually in some districts of Ireland, between the going out of the old and the incoming of the new crop; but because the peasantry were the sole providers for their own necessities, each out of his own small holding; and being all alike hard pressed, and apt to under-calculate the extent of their wants, they thus often found themselves without food before the new crop was ripe. The clergy were generally found favourable to a poor law for Ireland, so also were the shopkeepers, manufacturers, and dealers generally; for they being on the spot were hourly subject to appeals for relief, while the gentry, resident or non-resident, managed to evade the infliction. That country suffered under a cycle of evils, producing and reproducing one another. "Want of capital," says Mr. Nicholls, "produced want of employment; want of employment, turbulence and misery; turbulence and misery, insecurity; insecurity prevented the introduction or accumulation of capital; and so on. Until this cycle is broken, the evils must continue, and probably increase. The first thing to be done is to give security—that will produce and invite capital, and capital will give employment. But security of person and property cannot co-exist with extreme destitution; so that in truth the reclamation of bogs and wastes, the establishment of fisheries and manufactures, improvements in agriculture and in the general condition of the country, and lastly, the elevation of the great mass of the Irish people in the social scale, appeared to be all more or less contingent upon establishing a law providing for the relief of the destitute." *

Mr. Nicholls next applied himself to the solution of the problem how the workhouse system, which had been safely and effectually applied to depauperise England, might be applied with safety and efficiency to put down mendicancy and relieve destitution in Ireland. In that country the

task was beset with peculiar difficulties. Assuming the principle that the pauper should not be better off than the labourer, it would be difficult to devise any workhouse dress, diet, or lodging that would not be better than what many of the poor actually enjoyed. But, on the other hand, the Irish poor were fond of change, hopeful, sanguine, migratory, desultory in their habits, hating all restraints of order and system, averse to the trouble of cleanliness; and rather than be subject to the restrictions and regularity of a workhouse, an Irishman, in health and strength, would wander the world over to obtain a living. Hence, no matter how well he might be lodged, fed, and clad in a workhouse, he could not endure the confinement. Consequently, Mr. Nicholls found in the state of Ireland no sufficient reason for departing from the principle of the English poor law, which recognises *destitution* alone as the ground of relief, nor for establishing a distinction in the one country that does not exist in the other; and the result of twenty years' experience has fully borne out the correctness of his calculations.

It was upon this very able report of Mr. Nicholls that the Irish poor law was based. After undergoing much consideration, it was finally adopted by the government on the 13th of December, 1836, and on the following day he was directed to have a bill prepared, embodying all his recommendations. This was accordingly done; and after being scrutinised, clause by clause, in a committee of the cabinet specially appointed for the purpose, and receiving various emendations, the bill was introduced on the 13th of February, 1837, by lord John Russell, then home secretary, and leader of the house of commons. His speech on the occasion was able and comprehensive. "It appears," he said, "from the testimony both of theory and experience, that when a country is overrun by marauders and mendicants having no proper means of subsistence, but preying on the industry and relying on the charity of others, the introduction of a poor law serves several very important objects. In the first place, it acts as a measure of peace, enabling the country to prohibit vagrancy, which is so often connected with outrage, by offering a substitute to those who rely on vagrancy and outrage as a means of subsistence. When an individual or a family is unable to obtain subsistence, and is without the means of living from day to day, it would be unjust to say they shall not go about and endeavour to obtain from the charity of the affluent that which circumstances have denied to themselves. But when you can say to such persons, Here are the means of subsistence offered to you—when you can say this on the one hand, you may, on the other hand, say, You are not entitled to beg, you shall no longer infest the country in a manner injurious to its peace, and liable to imposition and outrage." Another way, he observed, in which a poor law is beneficial is, that it is a great promoter of social concord, by showing a disposition in the state and in the community to attend to the welfare of all classes. It is of use also by interesting the landowners and persons of property in the welfare of their tenants and neighbours. A landowner who looks only to receiving the rent of his estate, may be regardless of the numbers in his neighbourhood who are in a state of destitution, or who follow

mendicancy and are ready to commit crime; but if he is compelled to furnish means for the subsistence of those persons so destitute, it then becomes his interest to see that those around him have the means of living, and are not in actual want. He considered that these objects, and several others collateral to them, were attained in England by the act of Elizabeth. Almost the greatest benefit that could be conferred on a country was, he observed, a high standard of subsistence for the labouring classes; and such a benefit was secured for England chiefly by the quest act of Elizabeth. His lordship then alluded to the abuses which subsequently arose, and to the correction of those abuses then in progress under the provisions of the Poor Law Amendment Act, and said that we ought to endeavour to obtain for Ireland all the good effects of the English system, and to guard against the evils which had arisen under it.

In the course of his speech, lord John Russell stated that he had made inquiry with respect to the amount of relief afforded to wandering mendicants, and the result was that in most cases a shilling an acre was paid by farmers in the year, and he calculated that it amounted on the whole to perhaps £1,000,000 a-year. Among those thus relieved, he said, the number of impostors must be enormous. It was not proposed, however, to prohibit vagrancy, until the whole of the workhouses should be built and ready for the reception of the destitute. A lengthened discussion then took place in reference to the proposed measure, in which Mr. Shaw, Mr. O'Connell, lord Howick, Sir Robert Peel, lord Stanley, and other members took part. The bill was read a first time, and on the 25th of April lord John Russell moved the second reading, when the debate was continued by adjournment till the 1st of May. Notwithstanding a good deal of hostile discussion, the second reading was carried without a division. On the 9th of May the house went into committee on the bill. Twenty clauses were passed with only two unimportant divisions. The introduction of a settlement clause was rejected by a majority of 120 to 68. The vagrancy clauses were postponed for future consideration. The committee had got to the sixtieth clause on the 7th of June, when the King's illness became so serious, that his recovery was highly improbable, and the business of parliament was consequently suspended. He died on the 20th of June, and on the 17th of July parliament was prorogued, so that there was an end for the present to the Irish Poor Relief Bill, and all the other measures then before parliament.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Agricultural and Commercial Interests in the House of Commons—Motion of Lord Chandos—Admission of Ladies to the House of Commons—The Budget—Feeble Condition of the Navy—Mr. Hume's Motion for the Redaction of the Military Force—Remission of Duties—O'Connell's Election for Dublin declared Void—English Church Reform—Royal Commission: its First Report on the Duties and Revenues of Bishops—Reports on Cathedral and Collegiate Churches—Establishment of the Board of Ecclesiastical Commissioners; its Constitution and Powers—State of the Church—Non-resident Incumbents—Unequal Distribution of Church Property; its aggregate Amount—Reduction of Episcopal Incomes—Livings in *commendam*—Translations—The Tithe Commissioners—Commutation of Tithes into a Rent Charge—The Marriage Act—General Registration of Births, Marriages, and

Deaths—Report of the Select Committee on the Subject—The Registration Act; its Provisions, Machinery, and Operations—The Vital Statistics of England—The Operation of the New Poor Law—The Workhouse Test—Reduction of Newspaper Stamp Duties—Excessive Commercial Speculation and Overtrading in 1836-7—Gigantic Transactions in American Houses—Joint Stock Banks—Commercial Collapse in America and consequent Monetary Embarrassments in this Country—Paralysis of Trade—Bursting of Bubble Speculations—Our Foreign Relations—The Policy of Russia—Speech of Lord Dudley Stuart—Cracow—State of France—Attempt on the King's Life—The Infernal Machine—Arbitrary Measures of the Government—Freedom of the Press extinguished—Abolition of the Charter—Execution of Fieschi and his Accomplices—Limitation of the Elective Franchise—M. Thiers on the State of France and the Success of Louis Philippe's Government—Civil War in Spain—Insurrection at Madrid—The Constitution Proclaimed; its Principles—Honours voted to the Martyrs of Patriotism—Revolution in Portugal.

THE conservative party had got the impression that the commercial interest in the house of commons would swamp the landed interest, in consequence of the preponderance of the representatives of cities and boroughs. But that impression was shown to be a delusion by many votes, and by none more remarkably than by the division on a motion brought forward by lord Chandos on the 27th of April:—"That in the application of any surplus revenue towards the relief of the burdens of the country, either by remission of taxation or otherwise, due regard should be had to the necessity of a portion thereof being applied to the relief of the agricultural interest." That interest had been relieved to a considerable extent in a variety of ways during the recent progress of legislation, and especially by the Poor Law Amendment Act, which had been an immense boon to both landlords and tenants. The policy of the motion of lord Chandos was so unsound that Sir Robert Peel, lord Stanley, and Sir James Graham felt constrained to vote with ministers for its rejection. It is probable that several other conservative members followed their example, yet with all this accession of strength from the ranks of the opposition, the motion was defeated only by the narrow majority of 36; the numbers being—for the motion, 172; against it, 208.

On the 3rd of May a gallant attempt was made by Mr. Grantley Berkeley to have ladies admitted to hear the debates in the house of commons, and he carried his point to a certain extent, the motion for their admission having been adopted by a majority of 132 to 90. But it was rendered abortive by the subsequent refusal of the house to adopt the proposal of the chancellor of the exchequer for a grant of £400, to provide accommodation for the fair auditors. For a long time the public had obtained admission as spectators to both houses of parliament only by written orders of peers for the lords, and for the commons by the speaker's order to a seat below the gallery; and either by a member's order, or the payment of half a crown, to the strangers' gallery. But by a regulation promulgated this summer, the privilege of admission by the payment of half a crown was abolished, and the written order of the member was made the only passport, it having been resolved to put an end to the reception of all fees or gratuities by the officers of the house.

On the 6th of May the chancellor of the exchequer brought forward the budget, which placed in a strong light the long standing anomaly of distress among the agricul-

tural classes, contrasting with general prosperity in the commercial classes. He was enabled to exhibit a more favourable state of the finances than he had anticipated in his estimate the previous year. The total income of the nation was £46,980,000, its total expenditure £45,205,807, which would give a surplus of £1,774,193. Of this surplus all but £662,000 would be absorbed by the interest on the West Indian loan, which had now become a permanent charge. There was an addition of 5,000 seamen to the navy, for which the sum of £434,000 was required. This addition seemed to be quite necessary from the feeble condition of the navy as compared with the navies of other nations. On the 4th of March Mr. Charles Wood had stated that the French would have twelve sail of the line at sea during summer; that in 1834 the Russians had five sail of the line cruising in the Black Sea, and eighteen besides frigates in the Baltic. During this period there never were in our Channel ports more than two frigates and a sloop, with crews perhaps amounting to 1,000 men, disposable for sea at any one time, and that only for a day or two. At the same time the whole line-of-battle ships this nation had afloat in every part of the world did not exceed ten. Our land forces voted for the year were 81,319 men, not counting the Indian army. Of these one-half were required in the colonies. France had 360,000 regular soldiers, and three times the number of national guards. Mr. Hume, however, moved that the military force should be reduced by 5,000 men. "England," said he, "is a civil, not a military country; and I wish to see an end put to that vicious system which has arisen out of our late wars—the maintenance of a preposterously large military force during peace. No real friend of the government wished them to keep such a force. The Tories might. They were consistent men, attached by system to large establishments and great expense; but no well-wisher to the government would support them to enlarge the present unnecessary force, or maintain it without diminution. I think that not merely 5,000 men, but 15,000 men may be saved; and as to Ireland, the putting down the Orange lodges will render the presence of the military unnecessary."

The army, however, would cost less this year than last year by £154,000; and the ordnance by £10,000. With the surplus at his disposal, the chancellor of the exchequer proposed to reduce the duty on first-class paper from five-pence to three-pence-halfpenny—a suitable accompaniment to the reduction of the stamp on newspapers, already noticed—and to abolish the duty on stained paper; to remit the South Sea duties, amounting to £10,000; to reduce the duties on insurances of farming stock, on taxed carts, and on newspapers. He estimated the total amount of repeals for the present year at £351,000, which would be increased to £520,000 when they all came into operation.

From the annual report of the registrar-general it appears that the annual rate of marriage in England is 8 marriages, or 16 persons married, to every 1,000 persons living, or 1 person in 61 of the population married annually; there are 33 births to every 1,000 persons living, or 1 birth in 30 of the population; and 22 deaths to every 1,000 persons living, or 1 death in 45 of the population. The

marriage rate was highest in the years 1845, 1846, 1850, and four following years, in all of which it exceeded 85 marriages to 1,000 persons living; it was lowest in 1842 and 1843, when it fell below 76 per 1,000. The birth rate was highest (over 34 per 1,000) in 1851, 1852, 1856, and 1857; and lowest in the earlier years of registration, when many births were unrecorded. Fluctuations in the death rate are mainly influenced by epidemics, and by the varying temperatures of different years. In 1849 and 1854, years in which cholera greatly increased the mortality in this country, the rates were 25 and 23·5 per 1,000; and in 1847, when influenza prevailed epidemically, the rate was 24·7 per 1,000. Amongst the healthiest years were 1847, 1850, and 1856, in each of which the rate of mortality was below 21 per 1,000. The cost to the country of the registration system in force in England and Wales is now about £100,000, of which sum £65,000 are defrayed from the poor rates for registrars' fees; and the remainder—consisting of £18,000 for the central establishment, and £17,000 for fees to superintendent registrars, and expenses of registration officers—is defrayed out of the public revenue. The portion of the expenditure paid from the national exchequer is annually voted by parliament.

The return of Mr. O'Connell and Mr. Ruthven for Dublin having been petitioned against, the committee appointed to try its validity reported, on the 16th of May, that those gentlemen had not been duly elected. Mr. O'Connell had anticipated this result, and the seat for Kilkenny had been placed by a friend at his disposal. On the 1st of June there was a numerous meeting held at the "Crown and Anchor," for the purpose of organising a subscription to indemnify him for the expense to which he had been put in defending his seat. So important were his services deemed to the liberal party at that time, that the very large sum of £3,000 was subscribed at the meeting, and the sum raised ultimately amounted to nearly £9,000.

The measures of church reform that had been adopted in Ireland suggested the propriety of adopting similar measures in England, where the relations between the clergy and the people were not at all as satisfactory as they should be, and where the system of ecclesiastical finances stood greatly in need of improvement. Accordingly, a royal commission was appointed during the administration of Sir Robert Peel, dated the 4th of February, 1835, on the ground that it was "expedient that the fullest and most attentive consideration should be forthwith given to ecclesiastical duties and revenues." The commissioners were directed to consider the state of the several dioceses in England and Wales with reference to the amount of their revenues and the more equal distribution of episcopal duties, and the prevention of the necessity of attaching by *commendam* to bishoprics benefices with cure of souls. They were to consider also the state of the several cathedral and collegiate churches in England and Wales, with a view to the suggestion of such measures as might render them conducive to the efficiency of the established church; and to devise the best mode of providing for the cure of souls, with special reference to the residence of the clergy on their respective benefices. They were also expected to

report their opinions as to what measures it would be expedient to adopt on the various matters submitted for their consideration. The commissioners were the two archbishops, the bishops of London, Lincoln, and Gloucester, the lord chancellor, the first lord of the treasury, with several other members of the government and laymen not in office. When the change of government occurred a few months after, it was necessary to issue a new commission, which was dated the 6th of June, for the purpose of substituting the names of lord Melbourne and his colleagues for those of Sir Robert Peel and the other members of the outgoing administration. But before this change occurred, the first report had been issued, dated the 17th of March, 1835. Three other reports were published in 1836, dated respectively 4th March, 20th May, and 24th June. A fifth had been prepared, but not signed, when the death of the king occurred. It was, however, presented as a parliamentary paper in 1838.

The first report related to the duties and revenues of bishops. The commissioners suggested various alterations of the boundaries of dioceses. They recommended the union of the sees of Gloucester and Bristol, and of Bangor and St. Asaph. They also recommended the establishment of two new sees, Ripon and Manchester. They calculated the net income of the bishoprics of England and Wales at £148,875. They found that, owing to the unequal manner in which this revenue was distributed, the income of one-half the bishoprics was below the sum necessary to cover the expenses to which a bishop is unavoidably subject, which rendered it necessary to hold livings in *commendam*. To do away with this state of things, and with a view of diminishing the inducements to episcopal translations, they recommended a different distribution of episcopal revenues. In the second and fourth reports, and the draft of the fifth report, they presented the result of their inquiries on cathedral and collegiate churches. They recommended the appropriation of part of their revenues, and of the entire of the endowments for non-residential prebends, dignities, and officers, and that the proceeds in both cases should be carried to the account of a fund, out of which better provision should be made for the cure of souls. In their second report they stated that they had prepared a bill for regulating pluralities and the residence of the clergy.

On the 13th of August, 1836, an act was passed establishing the ecclesiastical commissioners permanently as "one body politic and corporate, by the name of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England." The number of commissioners incorporated was thirteen, of whom eight were *ex-officio* members—namely: the archbishops of Canterbury and York, the bishop of London, the lord chancellor, the lord president of the council, the first lord of the treasury, the chancellor of the exchequer, and one of the principal secretaries of state, who was to be nominated by the sign-manual. There were five other commissioners, including two bishops, who were to be removable at the pleasure of the crown. The lay members were required to sign a declaration that they were members of the united church of England and Ireland by law established. A subsequent act, passed in August, 1840, con-

siderably modified the constitution of this commission. The following were added to the list of *ex-officio* members: all the bishops of England and Wales; the deans of Canterbury, St. Paul's, and Westminster; the two chief justices; the master of the rolls; the chief baron; and the judges of the prerogative and admiralty courts. By this act the crown was empowered to appoint four laymen, and the archbishop of Canterbury two, in addition to the three appointed under the former act; and it was provided that, instead of being removable at the pleasure of the crown, the non *ex-officio* members should continue so long as they should "well demean themselves" in the execution of their duties. Five commissioners are a quorum. The chairman, who has a casting vote, is to be the commissioner present who is first in rank; and if the rank of all the commissioners present be equal, the chair is to be taken by the senior commissioner in the order of appointment. Two of the episcopal commissioners must be present at the ratification of any act by the common seal of the corporation; and if they, being the only two episcopal commissioners present, object, the matter is to be referred to an adjourned meeting. The commissioners may summon and examine witnesses on oath, and cause papers and documents to be produced before them. They were empowered to prepare and lay before the sovereign in council such schemes as shall appear to them best adapted for carrying into effect the recommendations contained in their five reports. These were to be ratified by an order in council, which order must be registered by the registrar of the diocese within which the place or district affected by the order is situated, and it must also be published in the *London Gazette*. Thenceforth the order has the same force as if it had been included in the acts of parliament for carrying into effect the reports of the commissioners.

The total number of benefices in England and Wales is 11,728, of which 9,669 are in the province of Canterbury, and 2,059 in the province of York. In consequence of the smallness of the livings, many clergymen hold benefices without doing any duty; others do duty in two parishes that are contiguous to one another. By an official return to parliament in 1815, it appears that there were 798 incumbents non-resident from sinecures, dilapidated churches, lawsuits, absence on the continent, &c. Altogether, the number of non-resident incumbents was upwards of 4,000; while the number of resident incumbents was 5,847. A great change was effected by the ecclesiastical commissioners; for the returns for the year 1850, made by the respective archbishops and bishops in England and Wales, give the total number of benefices in which the incumbents were resident as 8,077; while the non-resident were 2,952. Upwards of 8,000 had glebe houses. A considerable number of the benefices were under the annual value of £20, while sixteen of them were worth £2,000 and upwards. The rectory of Stanhope, in Northumberland, was worth £4,863; and Doddington, in Cambridgeshire, was of the annual value of £7,306. The income of the church of England is derived from land tithes, church rates, pew rents, Easter offerings, and surplus fees. The distribution of these revenues, according

to the report of the commissioners, was, in 1831, as follows:—Bishops, £181,631; deans and chapters, £360,095; parochial clergy, £3,251,159; church rates, £500,000—total, £4,292,885. The total number of churches and chapels of the church of England was then 11,825. For the purpose of raising the incomes of the smaller livings, the governors of queen Anne's bounty received the annual sum of £14,000, the produce of first-fruits and tenths, which were formerly paid to the pope, and at the reformation appropriated by the sovereign, till queen Anne "granted them for the augmentation of the maintenance of the poor clergy." The ecclesiastical commissioners applied to the same object a portion of the surplus proceeds of episcopal and capitular estates. In order to obtain funds for raising small livings, and increasing the efficiency of the established church, the income of the archbishop of Canterbury was reduced to £15,000; of York, to £10,000; that of the bishop of London, to £10,000; of Durham, to £8,000; of Winchester, to £7,000; of Ely, to £5,500; of St. Asaph and Bangor, to £5,200; and of Worcester, to £5,000. By these reductions the sum of £28,500 a-year was saved. The other bishops were to have incomes varying from £4,000 to £5,000. No ecclesiastical dignity or benefice was to be in future granted to any bishop to be held in *commendam*. These regulations, it was expected, would lessen translations, by leaving only three or four sees objects of temptation. Acts were passed for separating the palatine jurisdiction of Durham from the diocese, thus abolishing a remnant of the feudal system; also for extinguishing the secular jurisdiction of the archbishop of York, and the bishop of Ely, in certain districts, and for imposing restrictions on the renewal of ecclesiastical leases. Other measures of church reform, relative to residence, pluralities, and collegiate churches, having been abandoned for that session, a bill was passed suspending for one year appointments to cathedral dignities and to sinecure rectories.

By Act 6th and 7th Will. IV., cap. 71, a board of commissioners called the "tithe commissioners of England and Wales," was appointed, the object of which was to convert the tithes into a rent-charge, payable in money, but varying in amount, according to the average price of corn for seven preceding years. The amount of the tithes was to be calculated on an average of the seven years preceding Christmas, 1835; and the quantity of grain thus ascertained was to remain for ever as the annual charge upon the parish. The annual money value was ascertained from the returns of the comptroller of corn, who publishes annually, in January, the average price of an imperial bushel of wheat, barley, and oats, computed from the weekly averages of the corn returns during the seven preceding years. The commissioners reported in 1851 that voluntary commutations had been commenced in 9,634 tithe districts; 7,070 agreements had been received, of which 6,778 had been confirmed; and 5,529 drafts of compulsory awards had been received, of which 5,260 had been confirmed. Thus, in 12,038 tithe districts, the rent charges had been finally established by confirmed agreements or confirmed awards.

One of the most important measures of the session was

the Marriage Act, by which dissenters were relieved from a galling and degrading grievance, one which, of all others, most painfully oppressed their consciences. Notwithstanding their strong objection to the ceremonies of the established church, they were obliged, in order to be legally married, to comply with its ritual in the marriage service, the phraseology of which they considered not the least objectionable part of the liturgy. By this act marriages were treated as a civil contract, to which the parties might add whatever religious ceremony they pleased, or they might be married without any religious ceremony at all, or without any other form, except that of making a declaration

occurred, and so it was essentially defective. It only provided records of the performance of the religious ceremonies of baptism, marriage, and burial, according to the rites of the established church, affording, therefore, an insufficient register even for the members of that church; while for those who dissented from it, and consequently did not avail themselves of its services for baptism and burial, it afforded no register at all. Even this inadequate system was not fully and regularly carried out, and the loud and long-continued complaints on the subject led to an inquiry by a select committee of the house of commons in 1833. This committee received evidence from clergymen of the



LOUIS PHILIPPE, KING OF THE FRENCH.

of the act before a public officer, in any registered place of religious worship, or in the office of the superintendent registrar. This was a great step towards religious equality, and tended more than anything, since the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, to promote social harmony and peace between different denominations.

In connection with this reform, an act was passed which supplied a great want—namely, the uniform registration of births, deaths, and marriages. The state of the law on these matters had been very unsatisfactory, notwithstanding a long series of enactments upon the subject. Although the law required the registration of births and deaths, it made no provision for recording the date at which either

established church, parish clerks, members of the legal profession, and persons of all religious denominations, including gentlemen devoted to scientific investigations, and others whose wide-spread inquiries in foreign countries and peculiar facilities for information entitled them to respect. They unanimously agreed to a report in which they stated that they arrived at the following conclusions:—That the subject was urgently important, involving matters of great public and national interest, as well as individual satisfaction and rights and claims to property, and therefore deserving the attention of the humblest artisan, as well as of the most philosophical and statesman-like inquirer; that the existing law, being imperfect and

unjust, required not merely amendment, but real and fundamental reform; that being founded on religious rites, it was partial and intolerant, excluding a very considerable portion of the reflecting, intelligent, and influential population of the country, protestant and catholic dissenters, with 1,100 Baptist congregations, thus practically punishing their conscientious convictions by leaving their rights of property insecure; that to many pious and worthy clergymen of the established church the system was productive of pain and regret, as it often produced compliance with an obnoxious religious ceremony from mere secular motives; that even for the members of the established church it supplied no adequate proof of pedigrees or means of tracing ancestral descent, because the date of birth was not given, and the registers were often falsified, stolen, burnt, or inaccurately inscribed; that, in fact, great trouble, vast expense, utter uncertainty, capricious charges, and other local and general evils existed, while no means were supplied to obtain the information which other countries possessed and justly valued, as to the state of disease, the operation of moral and physical causes on the health of the people, the progress of population, and other matters, on which accurate knowledge can scarcely be too highly appreciated.

In order, therefore, to secure a complete and reliable record of vital statistics, the committee recommended "a national civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths, including all ranks of society, and religionists of every class." In pursuance of these recommendations, a general registration bill was brought into parliament; and in August, 1836, the act for registering births, deaths, and marriages in England became law, as a companion to the Marriage Act, which passed at the same time. Their operation, however, was suspended for a limited time by the act of 7 Will. IV., c. 1, and they were amended by the act of 1 Vict., c. 22, and came into operation on the 1st of July, 1837. One of the most important and useful provisions of this measure is that which requires the cause of death to be recorded, together with the time, locality, sex, age, and occupation, thus affording data of the highest importance to medical science, and to all those who are charged with the preservation of the public health. In order that fatal diseases may be recorded in a uniform manner, the registrar-general furnishes all qualified medical practitioners, amounting to 13,000 or 14,000, with books of printed forms—"certificates of cause of death"—to be filled up and given to registrars of births and deaths; and he causes to be circulated a nosological table of diseases, for the purpose of securing, as far as possible, uniformity of nomenclature in the medical certificates. In order to carry out this measure, a central office was established at Somerset House, London, presided over by an officer named the registrar-general, appointed under the great seal, under whom is a chief clerk, who acts as his secretary and assistant registrar-general, six superintendents, and a staff of clerks, who are appointed by the lords of the treasury. From this office emanate instructions to all the local officers charged with the duties of registration under the act, namely—superintendent registrars, registrars of births and deaths, and registrars of

marriages, any of whom may be dismissed by the registrar-general, on whom devolves the entire control and responsibility of the operations. The machinery is very extensive. There are 630 superintendent registrars, each of whom may appoint a deputy, with the approval of the registrar-general, to act for him in case of his illness or absence. Of these, 586 are clerks of boards of guardians. There are 2,197 registrars of births and deaths, and about half that number of registrars of marriages. There is a number of other persons by whom registration of marriage is effected; first, 12,332 officiating ministers of the established church, to whom register books have been furnished; second, 86 registering officers connected with the society of Friends, and 47 secretaries of synagogues. Two inspectors are constantly employed in visiting the districts into which England has been divided, for the purpose of instituting a searching inquiry as to the mode in which the responsible duties entrusted to the various registration officers are performed, personally visiting and instructing in each particular of their duties the district registrars, scrutinising the register books, pointing out any erroneous practices they may discover, and seeing that the regulations issued by the registrar-general are duly observed. At the end of each week, the inspectors report the result of their inquiries to the head office. Certified copies are deposited quarterly in the central register office, there to be arranged and indexed for facility of reference, by means of which a copy of an entry of any registered birth, death, or marriage, in any part of England or Wales, may be obtained at the cost of three shillings and sixpence, which includes the fee for search. The certified copies are all made on separate leaves of durable paper of a uniform size and peculiar texture, having a distinguishing watermark for the prevention of forgery. They are sent through the post-office to the central office, where, if found perfect, they are paged, and bound up in volumes for reference, which is facilitated by alphabetical indexes. In this way about a million and a quarter names are indexed each year; and at the end of 1858 these volumes contained no less than 26,600,392 names, viz.—6,083,906 of persons married, 12,209,383 of children born, and 8,307,103 of persons who died in the twenty years and six months from the 1st of July, 1837.

Great attention was drawn at this time to the operation of the new Poor Law Act, which seemed, in some respects, repugnant to humane and Christian feeling, and was strongly denounced by a portion of the press. An attempt was made by Mr. Walter to get the stringency of the law in some measure relaxed, and on the 1st of August he moved for a select committee to inquire into its operation, particularly in regard to out-door relief, and the separation of husbands from their wives, and children from their parents. But it seemed to be the opinion of the house that the workhouse test would lose its effect in a great measure if the separation in question did not take place. The operation of the act was certainly successful in saving the pockets of the ratepayers, for, on a comparison between the years 1834 and 1836, there was a saving to the amount of £1,794,990. The question did not seem to excite much interest, for the attendance was

thin, as appears by the numbers on the division, which were—for the motion, 46; against it, 82.

On the 15th of September the reduction of the newspaper stamp duties came into operation, the consequence of which was, that the price of the principal daily papers was reduced from sevenpence to fivepence, the latter sum being the price of several of the weekly papers, which were only reduced a penny; and some of them underwent enlargement. The provincial papers were generally published at the same price, but a few were sold at fourpence. Previous to the reduction, there was not a single provincial paper in England issued oftener than once a week. The old duty was fourpence, with a discount of twenty per cent. There was no discount on the new duty, which was a penny, so that the actual reduction was $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. It was calculated that under this new arrangement the proprietor of a London morning paper had twopence profit on the sale of every copy, after the allowance to the news vendor. He had this, in addition to income from advertisements, to defray the expenses of printing, editorial and literary aid, reporters, foreign correspondence, and the other charges of his establishment.

The winter of 1836-7 was marked by great commercial activity, and a strong tendency to over-trading, chiefly on the part of the banks. The result was a reaction, and considerable monetary embarrassment. In the reckless spirit of enterprise which led to these consequences, the American houses took the lead. The American speculators indulged an inordinate thirst for gain by land jobs, and over-trading in British produce. The most remarkable examples of this were afforded by three great American houses in London, called "the three W's." From an account of these firms, published in June, 1837, it appeared that the amount of bills payable by them from June to December, was as follows: Wilson and Co., £936,300; Wigan and Co., £674,700; Wildes and Co., £505,000; total acceptances, £2,116,000. This was upwards of one-sixth of the aggregate circulation of the private and joint-stock banks of England and Wales, and about one-eighth of the average circulation of the bank of England. The shipments to America by Wigan and Co. amounted to £1,118,900. The number of joint-stock banks that started into existence at this time was remarkable. From 1825 to 1833 only thirty joint-stock banks had been established. In that year the charter of the bank of England being renewed, without many of the exclusive privileges it formerly enjoyed, and the spirit of commercial enterprise being active, joint-stock banks began to increase rapidly. There was an average of ten new companies annually, till 1836, when forty-five of these establishments came into existence in the course of ten months. In Ireland there were ten started in the course of two years. The consequence of this greatly increased banking accommodation produced a wild spirit of commercial adventure, which collapsed first in America, where the monetary confusion was unexampled—bankers, importers, merchants, traders, and the government having been all flung into a chaos of bankruptcy and insolvency. This state of things in America had an immediate effect in England. Discounts were abruptly refused to the largest and hitherto most

respectable houses of Liverpool and London. Trade, in consequence, became paralysed; prices suddenly dropped from thirty to forty per cent.; and the numerous share bubbles—the railway projects, the insurance companies, the distillery companies, the cemetery companies, the sperm oil, the cotton twist, Zoological Gardens, and other speculations—which had floated on the pecuniary tide, all suddenly collapsed, and there was an end to the career of unprincipled adventurers. It is satisfactory, however, to observe that the sound commerce of the country soon recovered the shock thus given; and in less than two years the pecuniary difficulties had passed away. Commerce had resumed its wonted activity, and flowed steadily in legitimate channels. The American banks resumed payment, and the three great American houses, which had involved themselves to such an enormous extent, were enabled to meet all their liabilities.

The foreign relations of England at this period were, on the whole, satisfactory—as might be expected from the fact that our foreign policy was committed to the able management of lord Palmerston, who, while sympathising with oppressed nationalities, acted steadily upon the principle of non-intervention. Considering, however, the comparative smallness of our naval and military forces, the formidable military powers of Russia and France created a good deal of uneasiness. On the 19th of February there was a debate in the house of Commons on Eastern affairs, in which the vast resources and aggressive policy of Russia were placed in a strong light. On that occasion lord Dudley Stuart said, "Russia has 50,000,000 subjects in Europe alone, exclusive of Asia; an army of 700,000 men, and a navy of eighty line-of-battle ships and frigates, guided by the energy of a government of unmitigated despotism, at whose absolute and unlimited disposal stand persons and property of every description. These formidable means are constantly applied to purposes of territorial aggrandisement, and every new acquisition becomes the means of gaining others. Who can tell that the Hellespont may not be subject to Russia at any moment? She has a large fleet in the Black Sea, full command of the mouths of the Danube, and of the commercial marine cities of Odessa and Trebizond. In three days she may be at Constantinople from Sebastopol; and if once there, the Dardanelles will be so fortified by Russian engineers that she can never be expelled except by a general war. She could be in entire possession of these important straits before any expedition could be sent from this country, even if such a thing could be thought of against the enormous military force at the command of Russia. That Russia is determined to have the Dardanelles is evident from the treaty of Umkiar-Skelessi, by which she began by excluding the ships of all other nations. The effect of this treaty was to exclude any ship of war from these straits, except with the permission of Russia. Russia might at any moment insist on the exclusion of our ships of war from the Dardanelles—nay, she has already done so; for when lord Durham, going on his late embassy to the court of St. Petersburg, arrived at the Dardanelles in a frigate, he was obliged to go on board the *Pluto*, an armed vessel without her guns, before he

could pass the straits; and when he arrived at Sebastopol, no salute was fired, and the excuse given was that they did not know the *Pluto* from a merchant vessel. But both before and since Lord Durham went, Russian ships of war, with their guns out and their steamers flying, passed through the Black Sea to the Dardanelles, and again through the Dardanelles to the Black Sea. Russia has now fifteen ships of the line and seven frigates in the Black Sea. Sebastopol is only three days' sail from the Hellespont. Turkey has no force capable of resisting such an armament; the forts of the Hellespont are incapable of defence against a land force, for they are open in the rear. Russia might any day have 100,000 men in Constantinople before England or France could even fit out expeditions to defend it."

Lord Palmerston and Mr. Paulet Thompson treated the apprehensions of Lord Dudley Stuart as visionary, and expressed their conviction that there was nothing in the conduct of the czar to excite either alarm or hostility in this country. A few days later, however, an event occurred which showed how little Russia was to be relied upon; and that it was impossible to restrain her aggressive propensities, even by the most solemn treaty obligations, undertaken in the face of Europe, and guaranteed by the great powers. Cracow, which comprised a small territory about 490 square miles in extent, with a population of about 123,000, including the city, was at the general settlement in 1815 formed into a free-state, whose independence was guaranteed by the treaty of Vienna in the following terms:—"The town of Cracow, with its territory, is declared to be for ever a free, independent, and strictly neutral city, under the protection of Russia, Austria, and Prussia." During the insurrection of Poland in 1830, the little state of Cracow could not repress its sympathies, and the news of the outbreak was received there with the greatest enthusiasm. After the destruction of the Polish army, persons who were compromised by the revolt sought an asylum in Cracow; and in 1836 2,000 political refugees were found settled there. This served as a pretext for the military occupation of the city in February of that year, notwithstanding the joint guarantee that it should never be entered by a foreign army. This was only a prelude to the ultimate extinction of its independence, which occurred ten years later.

In France Louis Philippe had, since 1830, been working out the experiment of a constitutional government with a fair measure of success; not, however, without danger from the red republicans. On the 26th of July, 1835, during the festivities of the annual commemoration of the revolution of 1830, he narrowly escaped assassination. He was riding along the line of the national guard on the Boulevard du Temple, accompanied by his three sons and a splendid suite, when an explosion, like a discharge of musketry, took place from the window of a house. Marshal Mortier, general de Virigny, and twelve others, including a child, were killed on the spot, and about thirty were wounded; but the king, whose death was the object of the assassin, escaped unhurt. The police, guided by the smoke, rushed into the house, and seized the assassin in the act of letting himself down by a rope from the back

window of the apartment. The "infernal machine" which he employed consisted of twenty-five barrels, arranged horizontally upon a frame, which could be raised or lowered at pleasure. The touch-holes communicated by means of a train of gunpowder, and the lighting of one simultaneously discharged them all. The machine was placed at an open window, screened by a blind, the removing of which caused unexpected delay, which was the means of saving the king's life. Had he passed an instant later, he must have been killed, as one of the bullets struck his horse behind. The assassin proved to be a Corsican, named Fieschi, formerly a soldier and a police spy, who had pursued criminal courses, and had suffered for his offences in prison and in the pillory. Four persons, equally disreputable and still more obscure, were joined with him in the conspiracy; but, so far as appeared on the trial, their objects were simply personal, and they were not proved to be connected with any political party. The terrific explosion caused the greatest possible consternation for a few minutes; but as soon as it was known that the king and the royal family were safe, there were tumultuous expressions of joy. The forms of the review having been gone through by the king, the anniversary festivities were suspended, the tricolour flag was veiled in crape, the victims of the assassin received the honours of a public funeral, attended by the king and his family, and pensions were voted by the chambers to the poor persons who had been wounded, or who had been rendered destitute by the catastrophe.

The French government very unwisely availed themselves of this incident to strengthen the executive power; for, although the conspirators were not found to have any connection with political movements, the duke of Broglie, president of the council, endeavoured to give the affair a political colouring. "Factions," he said, "though subdued, still exist in secret; each day discloses the evil worked by them, and the disastrous traces of their passage. An inveterate hatred of the existing order, a determination to overthrow it at any sacrifice, were still to be found in the ranks of a minority which though vanquished, was not submissive. Respect for the laws was undermined, the character of the sovereign of their choice was unceasingly assailed, his life was hourly threatened, and society since 1830, in the entire absence of all foreign danger and menace, had exhibited nothing more than a protracted revolutionary crisis."

In consequence of this state of things, three bills were introduced for the purpose of extending the arbitrary power of the government, and extinguishing the liberty of the press. Any person found guilty of an offence against the person of the king by any mode of publication whatever, was to be imprisoned and subjected to an enormous fine, ranging from £400 to £2,000. For ridiculing the person or authority of the king, the imprisonment might extend to five years, and the fine to £400, with the deprivation of civil rights. A fine of £200 might be inflicted for even alluding to the name of the king in any discussion upon the acts of government. To reflect in writing upon the form or principle of the government was high treason, to be punished with unlimited incarceration, and a fine of

from £400 to £2,000. Imprisonment for five years, with a heavy fine, was denounced against all persons avowing themselves republicans or Carlists; the fine being doubled for the second offence, and multiplied four times for every succeeding offence. No editor could open a subscription for the payment of a fine, or publish the names of jurors, or withhold the names of the authors of inculpated articles, or publish any engraving, drawing, lithographic print, or emblem of any kind, without licence from the minister of the interior. A second bill was designed to nullify trial by jury, by allowing the jurors to vote by ballot, and taking the verdict of a simple majority. A Paris editor might be imprisoned in the West Indies, or in Africa. Notwithstanding determined opposition, these three bills passed into law, and the constitutional charter, for the violation of which Charles X. fled to make way for the citizen king, was virtually abolished by him without exciting the least popular movement either in Paris or the provinces. The citizens merely shrugged their shoulders, and avenged themselves by calling the new enactments the Fieschi laws. That person, with his accomplices, Morey, Peppin, Boireau, and Bescher, were tried in the month of January following. The trial lasted a fortnight, and on the 15th of February the court sentenced Fieschi to be conducted to the scaffold barefooted, and covered with a shroud. Peppin and Morey were guillotined in the usual way; Boireau was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment, and Bescher was acquitted. The three executions took place on the 19th of February, in the presence of an immense multitude, who did not manifest their sympathy with the sufferers by any lawless demonstrations.

Two attempts were made to obtain the throne of France during the reign of Louis Philippe, by Louis Charles Napoleon, the present emperor of the French. This prince was born at Paris, April 20th, 1808. He was the third son of Louis Napoleon—who had been made king of Holland by his brother, Napoleon I.—and of the beautiful and accomplished Hortense de Beauharnais. Having been brought up amid the splendours of imperial magnificence until he was about seven years of age, the downfall of the empire ruined his bright prospects, and drove him from France. After the "hundred days," his mother fled to Bavaria, where the education of her children formed the business of her life. When, in 1824, the name of Buonaparte had become less an object of terrors to Europe, she ventured to seek repose in Switzerland. There Louis Napoleon studied history and mathematics with ardour, and was particularly successful in the latter. He devoted himself also to manly sports and military exercises, and even joined the federal camp at Thun.

At the accession of Louis Philippe in 1830, he asked permission to return to France, and to serve as a common soldier in the army; but his requests were refused, and the decree of his banishment was renewed. Nevertheless, the prospect of a brilliant future presented itself to his mind in glowing colours. He and his elder brother were at Rome when the revolution occurred in the Pontifical States! and they both joined the popular side with enthusiasm. But the Austrians having crushed the movement, they fled to Forlì, where

his brother died in a few days; and he was saved from falling into the hands of his pursuers only by the courage and devotion of his mother, who hastened to him under an assumed name, and proceeded with him first to France—though it was death by law for a Buonaparte to enter that kingdom—and then to London. Circumstances, however, obliging the exiles to leave that city, they took refuge in Switzerland; and soon after his arrival there, Louis Napoleon was invited by the chiefs of the Polish revolution to place himself at their head. He was prevented from complying by the death of the duke of Reichstadt, the only son of the emperor Napoleon—a circumstance which made him the heir of his uncle—as well as by the rapid succession of events which rendered the cause of Poland hopeless at that period. This important change in his position caused European diplomacy to keep from this time a watchful eye upon him.

He now devoted himself to the study of great political questions, and in 1833 published his "*Considérations Politiques et Militaires*," which made a great impression in Switzerland. Two years after appeared his "*Manuel d'Artillerie*," which has been pronounced by competent judges an excellent treatise. While occupied in these studies, he formed plans which, in 1836, resulted in an attack on the fortress of Strasburg. The people being disaffected to the present régime, and the garrison still proudly cherishing the memory of the late-emperor, he hoped they would at once rally round his standard. From Strasburg he anticipated he could march on rapidly to Paris, bringing with him the garrisons of Alcaze and Rotheringen, and place himself at the head of the army before the government could take any measures to arrest his progress. He had paid a secret visit to Strasburg, and had won over the commander of artillery in the garrison and fifteen officers. But he sadly miscalculated: the attempt utterly failed; he was arrested and brought as a prisoner to Paris on the 9th of November, 1836. His life was spared, but he was banished to the United States, whence he soon returned to Switzerland. There he began fresh intrigues, which caused Louis Philippe to demand peremptorily that he should be expelled. The Swiss reluctantly complied with this demand, and the heir of Napoleon took refuge in London, where, in 1839, he published "*Les Idées Napoléoniennes*."

The following year he made another attempt on the French throne, which proved ridiculously abortive. Having hired an English steamer, the *City of Edinburgh*, he embarked with count Montholon, general Voisin, and fifty-three other persons, and having landed near Boulogne on the 6th of August, he summoned the garrison to acknowledge his authority. The summons was not obeyed, and the prince with his party went to a hill above the town, where he planted a flag with an eagle on the top of the staff. The national guard, however, beat to arms, he retreated to the beach, and was captured with his accomplices. On his landing, he had immediately scattered a printed proclamation, announcing the deposition of the king, and appointing a president of the council and a minister of war. He and his followers were tried by the peers of France for high treason, and



ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE LOUIS PHILIPPE BY THE "INFERNAL MACHINE."

found guilty. The latter were condemned to various terms of imprisonment, and the prince himself was sentenced to perpetual confinement in the fortress of Ham, where he remained for six years. He escaped in disguise in 1846, and arrived in London, where he remained till the revolution which led to his being elected president of the French republic.

During the reign of Louis Philippe the French chamber was little better than a mockery of representative government. It contained 200 members who were government functionaries, two-thirds of them being removable at pleasure. An eight-pound qualification was required for the suffrage; and such is the minute sub-division of land, that this gave only 280,000 electors for a population of 32,000,000. This number was subsequently reduced to 180,000 by the operation of the law of inheritance, which, by compelling the division of a farm between the children, continually disfranchised numbers, and thrust them out of the pale of the constitution. The extent to which this sub-division of land was carried is shown by the fact that 10,200,000 distinct properties were registered as paying land-tax, and of this number not more than 1,000 paid £40, which proves the paucity of large estates. These legal impediments to agricultural progress were not counteracted in their influence by facilities for the creation of national wealth by means of manufactures and commerce, because the French statesmen and people were wedded to the system of protection, and were as jealous of anything like reciprocity of commercial advantages as the most ignorant and stationary people in the world. Yet such was the effect of only five years of public tranquillity under the government of Louis Philippe, that the country enjoyed unexampled prosperity; and M. Thiers, the minister of the interior, could say at the commencement of the session of 1835, "If any man had predicted in July, 1830, a revolution will take place—it will subvert a throne, and yet for four years not a scaffold will be erected—for four years the country will be in security, and not only in the enjoyment of peace, but surrounded with a cordon of constitutional states—tranquillity will prevail throughout Europe—the national prosperity will be superior to anything known under the restoration, after fifteen years of peace—instead of national bankruptcy, the deficiency in the revenue caused by the restoration gradually will be reduced: had such language been held, would it have been credited? And yet these results were not imaginary; they were real, and admitted of incontestable proof. In Switzerland aristocratic government had been replaced by popular government; the hostile kingdom of the Netherlands had been dissolved; the monkish government of Ferdinand of Spain had been replaced by a constitutional monarchy; Don Miguel had been replaced on the throne of Portugal by Donna Maria. How had these results been accomplished without a war, and with the consent of Europe? By the wisdom of the ministerial system."

M. Thiers had not much to boast of in the constitutional monarchy of Spain. For, whatever were its merits in comparison with the systems that preceded it, it had not the merit of securing good government, protecting life

and property, and maintaining public tranquillity. During the summer of 1836 that unhappy country, always more or less disturbed, was the scene of fresh tumults and insurrections, breaking out at different points, at Malaga, Cadiz, Seville, and Cordova. The constitution of 1812 was proclaimed, and provincial juntas established in defiance of the queen's authority. Madrid was also the scene of insurrection, which was repressed, and the city was put in a state of siege. Soon after, a more determined demand was made for the constitution of 1812, when a regiment of militia forced themselves into the apartments of the queen regent, in spite of the remonstrances of the French and English ambassadors, and extorted from her a promise to accept that constitution. This daring act was the signal for a general rising in the capital. The prime minister, Isturitz, fled to Lisbon, and there took his passage for England. He was fortunate in escaping with his life, for had he fallen into the hands of the enraged populace, he would probably have shared the fate of general Quesada, the military governor of Madrid, who was caught about three miles from the capital, and killed. Order was at length restored by the queen regent proclaiming the constitution, subject to the revision of the cortes, and by the appointment of a decidedly liberal administration, which commenced by calling for a conscription of 50,000 men to carry on the war against the Carlists, whose property was, to a large extent, confiscated. The constitution so imperatively demanded by the people was first proclaimed at Cadiz in 1812, and again by Riego in 1820. It was now brought forward once more, and on the 24th of February, 1837, adopted by the general cortes assembled for the purpose, having been previously revised by a committee. According to this constitution, all Spaniards might freely print and publish their opinions, provided they were not contrary to the religion of the state; all the provinces were to be subjected to a uniform code of laws; and all Spaniards were to be alike eligible for public offices, according to their merit and capacity. The penalty of confiscation was prohibited. The cortes was to consist of two legislative assemblies—a senate and a congress of deputies—possessing co-ordinate rights and powers. The senators were to be chosen for life, must be possessed of independent fortunes, and not under forty years of age. One deputy was to be returned for every fifty thousand souls in the population, and they were to be elected for three years, parliament meeting annually. The powers of the crown were analogous to those of a British sovereign. He was not to be responsible, and his person was to be sacred and inviolable. The succession was to be in the order of primogeniture, preferring in the same degree the older to the younger, and the male to the female branch. If a queen regnant marries, her husband cannot take any part in the government of the kingdom. The independence of the judges and judicial administration were secured. A remarkable tribute to patriotism was paid by the new legislature. An act was passed providing that the orphans of all those who had died "martyrs to the cause of liberty" since 1823 should be adopted by the nation, and that the names of Riego, Empecenado, Torrijos, Mina, and others, should be inscribed in the churches.

The Spanish revolution had a marked effect on French politics. M. Thiers and his colleagues had been pressing for an effective intervention against Don Carlos; but they were unable to overcome the reluctance of the king to send a French army into Spain, even to sustain the *régime* which the king had recognised and approved. This was completely superseded by the changes that had just taken place. He should now interpose, not to protect the reigning dynasty against pretenders, but to take part in a war between constitutionalists and liberals of different shades. When, therefore, Louis Philippe was asked to send aid to the French legion of volunteers serving as auxiliaries in Spain, and to adopt other measures against the Carlists, as the only means of preventing the queen's government from being carried away by the torrent of revolution, he positively refused; whereupon M. Thiers and five of his colleagues resigned, having been in office for nine months. In the new administration, the name of M. Guizot appears as minister of public instruction.

Spain and Portugal are so bound together by natural sympathy, that they generally share the same vicissitudes. Bad feeling had arisen between the national party and the government in consequence of the appointment of prince Ferdinand, the husband of the queen, to be commander-in-chief of the army. Other causes increased the popular discontent, which was at its height when the public was electrified by the news of the Spanish revolution. The ministers were obliged to make concessions; but, besides being inadequate, they were too late. The steamboat from Oporto was loaded with opposition members, who were received with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of welcome. On the 9th of September the clubs had everything arranged for a revolution, and a mixed array of troops of the line, caçadors, and national guards, proclaimed the constitution adopted by John VI.; and, having sung a constitutional hymn, they appointed a deputation, headed by viscount La Bandiera, to wait upon queen Donna Maria. She had first contemplated resistance, but the army would not act against the people. The national guards were in possession of the city, having occupied the Rocio Square all night, and in the morning they were informed that the queen had yielded to their wishes, appointing a new ministry, with Bandiera at its head. Some of the most obnoxious of the ex-ministers took refuge from popular vengeance on board the ships of the British squadron lying in the Tagus. Most of the peers protested against the revolution; but it was an accomplished fact, and they were obliged to acquiesce.

CHAPTER XXXII.

State of Parties in 1837—Testimonial to Lord J. Russell—Speech of Lord Morpeth in the Whig Policy and its Results—Sir Robert Peel Lord Rector of the Glasgow University—Banquet to Messrs. Byng and Hume in Drury Lane Theatre—Opening of Parliament: the Royal Speech—Position of the Ministry—Irish Measures—Sheil on the Irish "Aliens" Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates—The King's Illness; his Death; his Character—Testimonies of Lord Melbourne, the Duke of Wellington, Earl Grey, and Sir Robert Peel—The Fitzclarences—Career of Mrs. Jordan—The Funeral Obsèques—Severance of the Crown of Hanover, which descended to the Duke of Cumberland.

The state of parties in the house of commons at the

opening of the session of 1837 was so evenly balanced, that the government had a very narrow majority. The number of whigs was calculated at 150, of liberals 100, and of radicals 80, making the total number of ministerialists 332. On the other side, the tories counted 139, the ultra-tories 100, and the conservatives, belonging to the new school which Sir Robert Peel had constituted, 80. This state of parties seemed to the leaders on each side to necessitate constant appeals to the great tribunal of public opinion, in order to sustain the government on the one hand, and to enforce the claims of the opposition on the other. Consequently, public meetings were held during the recess in most of the great towns, in which all the delinquencies of the tory party were recited, and their reactionary policy vehemently deprecated. On the other hand, the concessions of the whigs to democracy and popery, and their alleged unprincipled alliance with O'Connell, were urged as reasons why they should be hurled from power as speedily as possible. The cry of "The church in danger!" was also raised at this time against the government, which, however, was firmly supported by its own party out of doors. On the 10th of November a public dinner was given to lord John Russell at Bristol, when a piece of plate, which had been purchased by subscriptions of sixpence each, was presented to his lordship. Perhaps the most just and eloquent, as well as the most concise, defence of the liberal policy was given by lord Morpeth, afterwards earl of Carlisle, at a public meeting of his constituents at Leeds.

"I value," said he, "the constitution, and will do my utmost to maintain it; but under its broad and expansive shade I would remove every obstacle, and clear away every avenue of access, to every class, to every creed, to every race that owns its sway or courts its shelter. I would proceed in reducing and removing all the remainder of exclusive privileges and monopolies by which one class of our countrymen may be benefited to the detriment of the rest. I would give to religious as well as to civil freedom the most unobstructed range; and at one act I would desire to banish from our temples and altars the clash of sordid disputes and civil bickerings. I would cling to no abuse because it is ancient; shrink from no improvement because it is change. The destiny of parties, as of nations, is beyond human ken; but I shall always, as a member of party, recollect with pride that in four short years we have reformed the representation of the people in parliament—reformed and opened the municipal corporations of England and Scotland—swept from our blushing records the demon of slavery—opened wide the seas and shores of the globe to British trade and enterprise. And this, the legislation of four short years, has been—let the over-timid and over-bold mark this—achieved without one form of the constitution being violated—without one breach of the law being countenanced—without one drop of human blood being spilt."

Sir Robert Peel having been elected lord rector of the university of Glasgow, in opposition to Sir John Campbell, then attorney-general, the conservative leader was invited to a public banquet, which was attended by many of the nobility and gentry of the west of Scotland.

In replying to the toast of his health, Sir Robert Peel said :—

"I want not to taunt you with re-action or conversion, but I say, if you adhere to the sentiments which you professed in 1830, it is here you should come. You consented to a reform, to which you were invited in a speech by your sovereign, expressly on the condition that it should be according to the acknowledged principles of the constitution. I see the necessity of widening the foundations on which the defence of our constitution and our religious establishments must rest. But let us come to the main point, for I do not wish to conciliate your confidence by hoisting false colours. I mean to support the national establishments which connect protestantism with the state in the three countries. (Loud cheers, the whole company rising.) I mean to support, in its full integrity, the house of lords, as an essential and indispensable condition to the maintenance of the constitution under which we live. Do you also concur in that expression of opinion? And if you do, it is a timely declaration of it. The hour has arrived when, if these are our feelings, we must be prepared to act upon them. The disturbing influence of foreign example has diminished; the dazzling illusion of the glorious day has passed away; the affections of the people are visibly gravitating again to their old centre—full of respect for property, a love of rational freedom, and an attachment to long-established institutions. From these walls, I trust, a spirit will go forth to animate the desponding, and to encourage the timid. I look abroad from the spot on which I stand to the moral influence of that opinion which constitutes 'the cheap defence of nations.' I look to it for the maintenance of that system of government which protects the rich from spoliation and the poor from oppression. I look to that spirit which will range itself under no tawdry banner of revolution, but unfurl and rally round

" 'The flag that's braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze.'

Yes! I feel not a shadow of doubt that it will continue to float in triumph, and that the constitution, tried as it has been in the storms of adversity, will come forth purified and fortified in the rooted convictions, the feelings, the affections of a religious, a moral, and a patriotic people."

A splendid demonstration by the liberal party took place on the 23rd of the same month, in London. It was a public banquet given to Messrs. Byng and Hume, the members for Middlesex, in Drury Lane Theatre, the pit of which was boarded over, and upon the floor thus constructed the tables were ranged, having covers for 1,500, while the boxes presented a galaxy of ladies, and the galleries were crowded with sympathising and applauding spectators. The chair was occupied by Lord William Russell. Mr. Byng, in returning thanks for his health, remarked that "he had represented his constituents and their fathers for fifty years. He had been against the French war in 1793, both from principle and policy, but nine-tenths of the country were in favour of it. There was no doubt that the great bulk of the nation were favourable to that war, but they paid dearly for their horror of

French infidelity and republican anarchy, and for their subsequent dread of a French invasion."

Parliament was opened by commission on the last day of January. The royal speech announced the continuance of friendly relations with foreign powers, alluded to the affairs of Spain and Portugal, and directed the attention of parliament to the state of Lower Canada. It recommended a renewal of the inquiry into the operation of joint-stock banks; also measures for the improvement of civil and criminal jurisprudence, and for giving increased stability to the established church. Special attention was directed to the state of Ireland, with reference to its municipal corporations and the collection of tithes, and to "the difficult and pressing question of a legal provision for the poor." Animated debates on the address took place in both houses. The radicals, led on by Mr. Roebuck, strongly condemned the want of earnest purpose on the part of ministers, whom he represented as "worse than the tories." He accused them of pandering to popular passions on one side, and to patrician feelings on the other. But, situated as they were, what could they do? Their majority was small and uncertain in the commons, while the opposition in the lords was powerful and determined. They were trying to get on with a house of commons elected under the influence of a conservative administration. Of course, lord Melbourne could have dissolved parliament, and appealed to the country, in the hope of getting a working majority; but the king was decidedly averse to a dissolution; and it would have been an exceedingly unwise course to adopt, at a time when the precarious state of his health plainly indicated that the reign was fast drawing to a close, and its termination would necessitate another general election. It was unreasonable to expect that in consequence of weakness proceeding from such causes, a liberal cabinet should surrender the reins of power to the tory party, on the eve of a new reign, and with all the bright prospects that would be opened by the accession of a youthful queen to the throne. The ministry, however, lost no time in introducing their Irish measures—the new Municipal Reform Bill, and the Bill for the Relief of the Poor. The former, after three nights' debate, passed the commons by a majority—302 to 247. It was during this debate that Mr. Sheil delivered his brilliant reply to the indiscreet and unstatesmanlike taunt of lord Lyndhurst, who, when speaking on the same question in the upper house, declared that the Irish were "aliens in blood, in language, and religion." "The duke of Wellington," said Mr. Sheil, "is not a man of sudden emotions; but he should not, when he heard that word used, have forgotten Vimiera, Badajoz and Salamanca, and Toulouse, and the last glorious conflict, which crowned all his former victories. On that day, when the destinies of mankind were trembling in the balance, when the batteries spread slaughter over the field, and the legions of France rushed again and again to the onset, did the 'aliens' then flinch? On that day the blood of the men of England, of Ireland, and of Scotland was poured forth together. They fought on the same field, they died the same death, they were stretched in the same pit; their dust was commingled; the same

dew of heaven fell on the grass that covered them; the same grass sprang from the soil in which they reposed together. And is it to be endured that we are to be called aliens and strangers to that empire for whose salvation our best blood has been poured out?"

The subject of church rates having created much ill-feeling in towns and districts where the dissenters were most numerous, an attempt was made by the government to abolish the impost. It was found that the sum which it produced was about £250,000 a-year, and it was proposed to obtain that amount by a better management of the estates of bishops, deans, and chapters, by placing them under the control of eleven commissioners, who should first pay the bishops and dignitaries' salaries out of the proceeds, and devote the rest of the fund thus realised to the objects for which church rates were levied, namely, the repair of churches and the supply of the necessaries for public worship. But an outcry was raised against this plan as being based upon the principle of church spoliation. The bishops and clergy resisted strenuously, and the friends of the church were roused to such an extent that the majority in the house of commons on the second reading of the bill was only five. This majority was tantamount to a defeat, and therefore the measure was abandoned.

On the 9th of June a bulletin was published, which fixed public attention on the precarious state of the king's health. It announced that his majesty had suffered for some time from an affection of the chest, which had produced considerable weakness. The burden of regal state, assumed at so late a period of life, seemed to have been too much for his strength, and to have caused too great a change in his habits. Accustomed as he had been to live in a state of ease, free from care and responsibility, he soon began to feel the duties of his position irksome, and he gradually took less and less interest in state affairs. In the preceding month of April his eldest daughter, lady de Lisle, died, and also the queen's mother, the duchess-dowager of Meiningen. These events made a deep impression upon his mind, which acted upon his enfeebled constitution, and aggravated the symptoms of his disease. From the 9th of June, when the first bulletin was issued, he grew daily worse; the circulation became more languid, and the general decay more apparent. On the 20th of June he expired, in the seventy-third year of his age, having reigned nearly seven years. The queen was constant and unwearied in her attentions at his bed-side, so much so that it was stated she had not changed her dress for twelve days. The tolling of the great bell at the castle awakened the inhabitants of Windsor at four o'clock in the morning, announcing that the king was no more. At the usual time the royal standard was hoisted on the round tower, but only at half its usual height, and shortly afterwards the streets were filled with groups of persons discussing the merits and lamenting the loss of the good old king, of whom they were suddenly, though not unexpectedly, bereaved. He had received the sacrament on the Sunday previous from the archbishop of Canterbury, who was present at his death. He was lethargic, but conscious to the last of the presence of those upon whom

his affections were fixed. He was fervent in his expressions of religious hope; and just before breathing his last faintly articulated, "Thy will be done." A *post-mortem* examination showed that the nature of his disease was a general tendency to ossification and decay about the heart, the lungs, and the other vital organs. His kindness of heart and simplicity of character, which had endeared him greatly to all classes of his subjects, caused him to be generally and sincerely lamented. In the house of peers lord Melbourne referred to his death as a loss which had deprived the nation of a monarch always anxious for the interest and welfare of his subjects; and added, "which has deprived me of a most generous master, and the world of a man—I would say one of the best of men—a monarch of the strictest integrity that it has ever pleased Divine Providence to place over these realms. The knowledge which he had acquired in the course of his professional education of the colonial service and of civil matters, was found by him exceedingly valuable, and he dealt with the details of practical business in the most familiar and most advantageous manner. A more fair or more just man he had never met with in his intercourse with the world. He gave the most patient attention, even when his own opinion was opposed to what was stated, being most willing to hear what could be urged in opposition to it. These were great and striking qualities in any man, but more striking in a monarch." The duke of Wellington said:—"It has been my lot to serve his majesty at different periods of difficulty. Upon these occasions he manifested, not only all those virtues described by the noble viscount, but likewise that firmness, that discretion, that justice, and spirit of conciliation towards others, placed as he was in circumstances in which probably a sovereign never was placed before. I say that probably there never was a monarch who, under such circumstances, encountered the difficulties he met with, with more success than he did upon every occasion." The duke added that, although he had taken measures which led to his resignation of a high office as duke of Clarence, this fact caused no coldness when he came to the throne; "for," said he, "he employed me in his service, and ever treated me with the greatest tenderness, condescension, confidence, and favour, that so long as I live I never can forget." Earl Grey also bore testimony to the eminent qualities which lord Melbourne and the duke of Wellington had enumerated. He had found him a kind and indulgent master; and a man more sincerely devoted to the interests of his country, and better understanding what was necessary for the attainment of that object—"more patient in considering every circumstance connected with those interests, or in the discharge of his duty on all occasions, never did exist; and if ever there was a sovereign entitled to the character, he might truly be styled 'the patriot king.'" In the house of commons Sir Robert Peel crowned the eulogy on the character of the departed monarch by saying:—"He did believe it was the universal feeling of the country that the reins of government were never committed to the hands of one who bore himself as a sovereign with more affability, and yet with more true dignity—to one who was more compassionate for the sufferings of

others, or to one whose nature was more utterly free from all selfishness. He did not believe that in the most exalted, or the most humble station, there could be found a man who felt more pleasure in witnessing and promoting the happiness of others."

By his will the king bequeathed £2,000 to each of his children, of whom eight survived him, with equal shares in a policy of life insurance for £40,000. This was a modest provision for the children of a king; but, as has already been stated, they were not the children of his queen, and, besides, the sons were all well provided for otherwise, in situations about the court, in the army, in the navy, and the church; while the daughters were well married. The race of Fitzclarences had so multiplied under these auspices, that the king left behind him seventeen grandchildren. He had two daughters by his queen, but both died in infancy, and thus the only object of his marriage with the princess Adelaide was frustrated. The truth is, he had been virtually married for many years to Mrs. Jordan—an actress—with whom he lived as his wife, and whom he treated with as much attention and respect as could be expected under his peculiar circumstances. Jordan was only an assumed name. Her real name was Dorothy Bland. Her connection with the king, then duke of Clarence, was suddenly broken off in 1811. He settled upon her a yearly allowance of £4,400 for the maintenance of herself and her daughters, with the provision that if she returned to the stage, the four daughters, together with £1,500 allowed for them, should revert to the father. But her passion for the stage seems to have overcome all other considerations, and she resumed her profession a few months after. Getting involved in pecuniary embarrassments, she subsequently retired to France, where she gradually sank under the weight of her afflictions, and died at St. Cloud, July 3rd, 1816. Her children by the prince were freely received in aristocratic society, and on the death of their father, the allowance of £500 a-year was continued to them by Queen Victoria.

The royal remains lay in state in the Waterloo chamber, covered with a purple velvet pall, under a canopy of purple cloth, with the imperial and regal crowns, and all the usual insignia, until the 8th of July, when they were borne to St. George's Chapel, all the regal household, the privy councillors, the legal dignitaries, the prelates, the peers, and the ministers of state, attending the funeral obsequies. The crown of Hanover descending exclusively to males, it was, by the accession of a female sovereign to the throne, dissevered from the crown of England, and the duke of Cumberland, the next male heir, departed with his family to take possession of the Germanic kingdom. The funeral service of William IV. concluded thus:—"Let us humbly beseech Almighty God to bless and preserve with long life, and health, and honour, and all worldly happiness, the most high, most mighty, and most excellent Princess, our sovereign lady Victoria, now by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, queen, defender of the faith, and sovereign of the most noble order of the garter. God save the queen!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

National Progress from 1820 to 1837—Population—Enumerations of the People; their Utility—The Irish Census of 1831—Emigration—Rates of Increase—Advance in the well-being of Society—Employments of the People—Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce—Number of Males twenty years old and upwards—Relative Numbers employed in Agriculture and Manufactures, &c.—How the People lived: Food, Clothing, Dwellings—Enormous Increase of Consumption: Timber, Cotton, Wool—Home Production of Food: Difference between England and Ireland—Extent of the National Resources—Exports—Property Tax: Amount of Insurances—Improved House Accommodation—Cotton: its Production and Supply—The Spinning Jenny and the Mule—Power Looms—The Lace Manufacture—Progress of the Cotton Trade: its Social Effects—Increased Demand for Labour—Elevation of the Working Classes: General Prosperity—Indebtedness of England to Inventors—Foreign Competition—The Hosiery Manufacture—The Bobinet Manufacture—The Silk Trade—Evil of Protection—Smuggling—The Woollen Manufacture: its History—Foreign Competition—Progress of the Trade—British Wool—The Woollen Manufacture in Ireland—The Linen Manufacture in Ireland, Scotland, and England: its extraordinary Improvement and Progress—Employment of Children in Factories.

THE most natural order in which to describe the PROGRESS OF THE NATION appears to be, first, to exhibit the growth and increase of society in point of population; secondly, the material resources by which its development has been effected and its strength sustained; thirdly, the agencies by which those material resources have been produced and made available; fourthly, the means by which the intellectual, moral, and religious life of society have been maintained, the civilising influences by which it has been elevated and refined, the spiritual influences by which its virtues have been fostered and invigorated, and by which it has been guided and supported in the path of duty, and the manners and customs by which the age has been characterised. In pursuance of this method, therefore, we shall now proceed to trace the social progress of the United Kingdom from the accession of George IV. in 1820 to the accession of queen Victoria in 1837. As to the two reigns that we have passed over, they will be more conveniently united for our present purpose, inasmuch as the great movements by which society has been mainly affected were in a great measure common to both reigns, and could not be treated separately without in some respects marring the general effect.

It is a singular fact, and by no means creditable to the "collective wisdom of the nation," that we have had no authentic enumeration of the people till the beginning of the present century. Prior to that time the amount of our population was a matter of conjecture. Estimates were formed, it is true; but they were based upon defective data, and could not be relied upon as even an approximation to the truth. Accordingly, different writers came to different conclusions. Dr. Price, for example, endeavoured to make it appear that there had been a gradual decline in the population of England since the revolution of 1688 till 1780, when he wrote upon the subject. His opinions were combated by Arthur Young, who inferred, from the progress of improvements in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, that there must have been an increase in population. Other writers replied to the arguments of Dr. Price, contending that the returns on which he relied were fallacious, and that his conclusions were illogical. The result, however, of the census of 1800 showed that the

population of England had made progress through the whole of the last century, with the exception of the first ten years, when it seemed to have declined. Mr. Finlayson, the celebrated actuary, drew up a statement founded on the returns of births, marriages, and deaths, giving an estimate of the population of England at decennial periods, from which it appears that in the year 1700 it was 5,134,516, and in 1800 it was 9,187,176. The census has been regularly taken ever since at decennial periods, namely in 1811, 1821 (when Ireland was included for the first time), 1831, 1841, 1851, and 1861. These enumerations have been of the greatest importance in throwing light upon social progress. As a general result it was found that during the present century the population of the United Kingdom increased with unprecedented rapidity, specially in the cities and towns; that the duration of human life has been very much extended; and that the industrial character of the community has changed. Manufacturing pursuits having obtained an ascendancy over those connected with agriculture, population increased more rapidly in Ireland than in Scotland, but not so fast as in England. The less rapid augmentation of the population in Scotland has been ascribed to the consolidation of farms, the emigration of the people, and the crowded state of the dwellings.

The diminished rate of mortality is one of the most gratifying facts deduced from vital statistics. In 1780 the annual rate of mortality in England and Wales was 1 in 40. In 1801 it was 1 in 48, and in 1830 it was 1 in 58. There were fewer births in a family, but, owing to better care and nurture, and better sanitary conditions, a greater number arrived at maturity. At the beginning of the century one-third more children died of convulsions than in the reign of William IV. Several diseases that had been most destructive, such as small-pox, leprosy, scurvy, colic, and rickets, had been greatly mitigated, or wholly disappeared. Malignant fevers were less fatal in their influence, and from the visitation of plagues which once swept off populations by wholesale, the nation had been happily for a long time exempt.

The population of the United Kingdom, as found at the enumerations of 1821, 1831, and 1841, was as follows:—

	1821.	1831.	1841.
England	11,261,437	13,091,005	15,000,154
Wales	717,438	806,182	911,603
Scotland	2,093,456	2,365,114	2,620,184
Army, Navy, &c.	319,800	277,017	188,453
Great Britain	14,391,631	16,539,318	18,720,394
Ireland	6,801,827	7,767,401	8,175,124
Army, Navy, &c., Ireland ..	—	—	21,473
Islands in the British Seas ..	89,508	103,710	124,040
United Kingdom	21,282,966	24,410,429	27,041,031

The increase in Ireland between 1831 and 1841 is at the rate of only $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., while in the preceding period of ten years, it was very nearly $14\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This great difference between the two periods was referred by the census commissioners to emigration and other causes. The records of the custom house showed that the number of emigrants from the ports of Ireland in the ten years preceding 1841 were 214,047; they add 152,738 emigrating from Liver-

pool, and 10 per cent. more on account of imperfect returns. This makes the whole number 403,459. The population of Ireland was further kept down by the numbers who continually sought a living in England and Scotland. The number of Irish born persons living in other parts of the United Kingdom at the enumeration of 1841 was 419,256; while the residents in Ireland not native born were only 340,608, causing a difference in the population of 384,648 persons, besides the natural increase therefrom during ten years. A further allowance of 210,473 was claimed for the army and the families of soldiers, as well as for the recruits furnished to the army of the state and the East India Company, said to have amounted to 390,179. If all these persons were added to the number of people found living in Ireland in 1841, they would make up a population of 8,774,049, and would exhibit an increase of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Still, with all these additions and allowances, the rate of increase falls short of the returns for the previous ten years, for which no sufficient natural causes have been assigned. But the difference has been satisfactorily accounted for by the circumstances connected with the enumeration of the people in 1831. It was a time of great political excitement, and there was a strong desire in connection with the agitation for parliamentary reform, to make the population appear as large as possible, in order that the element of numbers might have its full effect in increasing the number of Irish representatives. To this motive for exaggeration was added another not less powerful, in the unwise arrangement made for paying the enumerators employed in proportion to the numbers returned. Making a reasonable deduction on these grounds, it will be found that the rate of increase from 1821 to 1831 was not really greater than in the following decennial period.

However that may be, the result of the foregoing table shows that the population of Great Britain and Ireland, which in 1821 amounted to 21,193,458, was at the enumeration in 1831, 24,306,719, showing an actual increase in the numbers of 3,113,261 souls in ten years; the per-centage rate of increase during that interval being 14·68, or very nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum; and that at the last enumeration in 1841 the numbers were 26,916,991, being an increase since 1831 of 2,610,272, or 10·74 per cent., which is very little beyond 1 per cent. per annum. Comparing 1841 with 1821, it appears that the increase in the twenty years was in England 33·20, or 1·66 per cent. per annum; Wales, 27·06, or 1·35; Scotland, 25·16, or 1·25; Ireland, 20·50, or 1·02; the United Kingdom, 27·06, or 1·35 per cent. per annum. For the purpose of comparison with the corresponding number of years in the present century, it may be stated that the increase during thirty years, from 1700 to 1800, is computed to have amounted to 1,959,590, or $27\frac{1}{10}$ per cent., while the actual increase in England and Wales, in the same space of time between 1801 and 1831, as found by numeration, reached to 5,024,207 souls, or $56\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

Another instructive fact, indicative of social progress, deserves to be mentioned. It appears that in each division of the kingdom there was a larger proportion of the population between the ages of fifteen and fifty in 1841

than in 1821. In each 10,000 persons living there were between those ages—

	In 1821.	In 1841.	Increase.
In England	4,690	5,041	351
Wales	4,536	4,785	249
Scotland	4,749	4,982	233
Ireland	4,901	4,921	20

This index of social improvement pointed to a less favourable result in Ireland than in England.

	England.	Ireland.
Children under fifteen years	3,605	4,041
Adults between fifteen and fifty	5,041	4,021
Elderly people between fifty and sixty	642	606
Above sixty years old	712	432
	10,000	9,100

see this very clearly by comparing the purely agricultural counties of England with the manufacturing districts. Thus, the increase during the ten years ending 1841 was in Buckingham only 6·4 per cent; in Cumberland, 4·9; in Devon, 7·8; in Dorset, 9·9; in Essex, 8·6; in Hereford, 2·4; in Norfolk, 5·7; in Oxford, 6·2; in Suffolk, 6·3; in Westmoreland, 2·5; and in the North Riding of York, 7 per cent. To this almost stationary condition of the purely agricultural districts the manufacturing counties present a striking contrast. In Chester, the increase was 18·3 per cent.; in Durham, 27·7; in Lancaster, 24·7; in Middlesex, 16; in Monmouth, 36·9; in Stafford, 24·3; in Warwick, 19·3; and in the West Riding of York, 18·2.



VIEW OF NOTTINGHAM. FROM AN ORIGINAL SKETCH.

Having thus ascertained the number of the people, and the rate of increase at different periods, and arrived at the conclusion that there has been a steady advance in the well-being of society during the present century, it is natural to inquire in the next place how the people were occupied, by what employment they supported themselves, and augmented their comfort and enjoyment. In pursuing this inquiry, we shall find that had the people been dependent upon land for their support, they could not have increased in the same proportion, nor have been nearly so happy, and that the secret of our superior national wealth lies in our manufactures and commerce. We shall

A very instructive point of comparison is the relative increase of different classes of occupations in the decennial period from 1831 to 1841. In arranging and analysing the census returns of different periods, Mr. Rickman rendered valuable service to the country; but it is to be regretted that he did not attach due importance to the matter of age, and that having obtained the ages of persons living in 1821, he was contented at the next enumeration with ascertaining the number of males twenty years of age and upwards, assuming that the proportionate ages in any country must be considered invariable, and that when once ascertained as they had been in 1821, it must be a

needless labour to collect them in future. "How ill-founded in fact this assumption was, has been proved by the returns of 1841, and indeed it is surprising how a mind so acute as was that of Mr. Rickman could have formed the belief that amid constantly varying circumstances of health and disease, abundance and scarcity, war and peace, to say nothing of emigration and other minor disturbing causes, this most significant indication of the condition of the people should alone remain unchanged. At the enumeration of 1821, which, according to Mr. Rickman, should exhibit the proportions at all times of the ages of the population, it appeared that the number of males twenty years of age and upwards living in England was 2,424 in each 10,000 of the population. This proportion was increased in 1831 to 2,444 in 10,000, and in 1841 to 2,597 in that number. Whether the maximum proportion has yet been reached, it is not possible to say, neither is it possible to determine what is the proportion which, under the ordinary conditions of society, would be maintained. A state of war which selects its victims for the most part from among the adult male population would inevitably change the proportion; and it is no doubt one result of the peace so long maintained in Europe that the number of adult males now bears so much larger a proportion to the aggregate population than it bore in 1821, a few years after the termination of one of the most bloody wars that ever stained the annals of history."*

A comparative return of the commissioners includes males only, ages twenty years and upwards, and exhibits the following results. The number of occupiers and labourers in agriculture had decreased in that period from 1,251,751 to 1,215,264; but the commissioners explained this result by supposing that numerous farm servants had been returned in 1841 as domestic servants instead of as agricultural labourers. Persons engaged in commerce, trade, and manufactures had increased from 1,572,292 to 2,039,409 (or 29·7 per cent.); capitalists, bankers, professional, and other educated men, from 216,263 to 286,175 (or 32·3 per cent.); labourers employed in labour not agricultural had decreased from 611,744 to 610,157; other males, twenty years of age, except servants, had increased from 287,337 to 392,211; male servants, twenty years of age and upwards, had increased from 79,787 to 164,384; including, however, as already noticed, many farm servants. For the purpose of instituting a just comparison of the relative increase of particular employments, it must be understood that the total number of male persons, twenty years of age and upwards (exclusive of army, navy, and merchant seamen), had increased in this period of ten years from 3,969,124 to 4,707,600 (or 18·6 per cent.). Making due allowance for the probable error in the return of agricultural labourers, we are forced to conclude that that class had either not increased at all, or had increased in a very small degree; and that the class of labourers not agricultural had positively diminished; while capitalists, bankers, professional, and other educated men had increased 32·3 per cent.; persons engaged in trade and in manufactures, 29·7 per cent.; and domestic servants,

100 per cent.; or, allowing for farm servants, say 90 per cent. Thus the two classes who earn the lowest wages were alone stationary or retrograde, the highest class in wealth and intelligence had increased 32·3 per cent.; and the domestic servants, whose numbers are a certain indication of the means of their employers, had increased 90 per cent. Nor must another important fact be omitted in connection with the decrease in the class of labourers, namely, the immense numbers of Irish, who notoriously perform the most laborious parts of industry. In Lancashire, the persons born in Ireland formed in 1841 6·3 per cent. upon the whole population; in Cheshire, 3·6 per cent.; in Ayrshire, 7·3; in Dumbartonshire, 11; and in Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire, upwards of 13 per cent. It would seem, therefore, that the classes of British labourers are gradually raising themselves into a higher condition and more lucrative employments; and the demand for the lowest description of labour caused by their withdrawal from it is supplied by their Irish brethren. The number of female domestic servants increased in Great Britain from 670,491, in 1831, to 908,825 in 1841, or 35 per cent. In concluding this statement of the industrial occupations of the people of Great Britain, it is gratifying to learn that the whole "of alms-people, pensioners, paupers, lunatics, and prisoners," amounted, in 1841, to 1·1 per cent only upon the population.

Having got the numbers and employments of the people, our next point of inquiry shall be the manner in which they lived, how they were fed, and clad, and lodged, and to what extent they enjoyed the necessities, the comforts, and the luxuries of life. Information on these points has been supplied by the census commissioners, so that, by the comparison of the consumption of 1831 with the consumption of 1841, we are enabled to ascertain the advancement of the community in well-being, the increase of enjoyment and happiness, and the diminution of privation and misery. We find, then, that the rate of increase within those ten years was, setting aside fractions—in butter, 106 per cent.; cheese, 90 per cent.; cocoa, 283 per cent.; coffee, 25 per cent.; tea, 21 per cent.; rice, 75 per cent.; eggs, 57 per cent.; tallow, 55 per cent.; soap, 43 per cent.; tobacco, 14 per cent.; crown glass, 12 per cent.; green or bottle glass, 97 per cent.; paper, 54 per cent. The consumption of several of these articles was restrained by enormous taxation. Still, the consumption increased much faster than the population, which shows a positive increase of enjoyment; and, in connection with this, it is gratifying to remark a fact which precludes an impression that might be produced by the increase in the number of bottles—namely, that the consumption of duty-paying spirits of all kinds, whether British or foreign, had decreased to the extent of more than 7 per cent., while, in the same period, the duty on wines increased more than 3 per cent.; and, what is more remarkable, the quantity of hops that paid duty had been reduced 19 per cent., and of malt 13 per cent.

There are three kinds of raw material, the consumption of which is particularly indicative of social advancement, as giving employment to the people, adding to their comforts, and increasing the national wealth. These are

* Porter's "Progress of the Nation," p. 15.

timber, cotton, and wool. Taking all the different kinds of imported timber, there was an increase during the ten years of 37 per cent.; in cotton there was an increase of 61 per cent.; and of sheep and lamb's wool, in addition to the home production, there was an increased importation of more than 78 per cent.

The advancing or stationary condition of a people may be known from the number of persons employed in the production of food for the population in comparison with the number of those who are pursuing other avocations tending to increase the national wealth, or who are themselves the employers of labour. In this respect, there was a very wide difference between England and Ireland. In Great Britain, in 1831, about two-sevenths of the agriculturists were occupiers of land, and about half of them employed labourers. In Ireland, only about one-thirteenth of the agricultural class were occupiers employing labourers. There were in Ireland, in 1841, 1,472,789 families, of whom more than 66 per cent. were engaged in agricultural pursuits; and of 2,341,895 males fifteen years old and upwards, more than 70 per cent. were employed in producing food. In England, at the same time, 1,000 persons employed in agricultural processes supplied the wants, as respects food, of 3,984 persons, including themselves. One person raised food enough of home production to be consumed by four persons; whereas in Ireland, 1,000 persons, engaged in agricultural employment as farmers and labourers, produced food for only 1,511 persons, including themselves. The improvements that had been effected in British agriculture, particularly in the application of machinery to farming purposes, had caused an actual diminution in the number of persons employed on the land—which in 1831 was 1,243,057 adult males, out of a population of 16,539,318, while in 1841 only 1,207,989 were so employed, out of a population of 18,720,394—showing that while more than 2,000,000 were added to the population, and the productiveness of the country greatly increased, the labour of 35,000 persons was transferred from agriculture to manufactures.

The population of Great Britain has thus rapidly increased, and the condition of the people has improved, notwithstanding heavy taxation, and the burden of an enormous national debt, incurred by one of the most protracted and expensive wars on record, which strained the national energies to the uttermost. How vast, then, must be the national resources, by which all demands have been met, leaving the state stronger and wealthier than ever! The extent of these resources is shown in some measure by the amount of our exports. The total declared value of all British and Irish produce and manufactures exported in 1831 was £37,164,372; in 1841 the value of exports had increased to £51,634,623, being at the rate of 38·9 per cent. It is instructive to notice the various articles of export on which the increase was the greatest. In articles of clothing it was 54 per cent.; in brass and copper manufactures, 89; in cordage, 79; in cotton manufactures, 23; in cotton twist and yarn, 82; in earthenware, 30; in glass, 127; in iron and steel, wrought and unwrought, 156; in leather, 34; in linen manufactures, 33; in linen thread, tapes, &c., 138; in linen yarn, 11,071; in machinery and

mill work, 422; in silk manufactures, 36; in tin and pewter ware, 69; in British wool, 220; in woollen and worsted yarn, 249; in woollen manufactures, 39 per cent.

Another example of the greatly increased commerce of the country is afforded by the returns of shipping. In 1831 the number of ships, British and foreign, engaged in the colonial and foreign trades was 20,573, of which the total tonnage amounted to 3,241,927. In 1841 the number of ships had increased to 28,052, and the tonnage to 4,652,376, giving an increase of 43 per cent. In the former year the tonnage employed in our coasting trade amounted to 9,419,681; in the latter it had increased to 11,417,991, showing an increase of 91 per cent. These figures indicate extraordinary commercial activity, and decided progress. There must have been abundance of capital embarked in all the multifarious undertakings by which the vast exports of manufactured goods were kept up.

But other indications of national wealth have been referred to by the census commissioners of 1841. Although insurance was discouraged by a duty of 200 per cent., the sums insured against fire in the United Kingdom amounted, in 1831, to nearly £527,000,000, and in 1841 this amount had increased by 29 per cent. During the same period the accumulations in savings banks were very large, and went on increasing. In 1831 there were nearly 500,000 depositors, whose deposits amounted to about £14,000,000. In 1841 it was found that both the depositors and the amount deposited had very nearly doubled. The capital invested in railways was estimated in the railway report of 1839 at £60,000,000, while the sums authorised by parliament to be raised for various public purposes, for roads, bridges, docks, canals, navigation, markets, lighting, and improving towns, showed that there was an abundance of capital, beyond the ordinary demands of business and commerce, constantly seeking investment. From the proceeds of the property tax, which in 1815 was about £52,000,000, and in 1842 over £82,000,000, an estimate has been formed, in the absence of returns, for the years 1831 and 1841, which sets down the increase of real property during that period as not less than from 20 to 25 per cent. In 1815 the annual profits of trades in England and Wales were assessed at £35,000,000 in round numbers, and in 1841 they had increased to £50,000,000. During the decennial period, 1831-41, legacy duty had been paid upon a capital of about £423,000,000, or more than one-half the aggregate amount upon which the duty had been paid in the thirty-four preceding years. The stamp duties, also, upon probates of wills and letters of administration in the United Kingdom amounted to upwards of £1,000,000, having increased in ten years at the rate of 10 per cent.

It might naturally be inferred, from the proofs of material progress given in the foregoing pages, that growing national prosperity would lead to increased house accommodation, and better dwellings for all classes of the people; and we have, in connection with this subject, a very suggestive fact, namely, that no less than half a million new houses were erected in the decennial period now under review. The returns of house accommodation in Ireland repre-

sented a large portion of the population in a miserable condition in this respect. In the rural districts forty-three per cent., and in the civic districts thirty-six per cent. of the families in Ireland were found living in mud cabins or huts, each with only one room. Nearly, but not quite, the same proportion were living in similar cabins with two rooms.

The marvellous increase of national wealth in Great Britain since the reign of George III. is to be mainly ascribed to two mechanical agencies—the spinning-jenny and the steam-engine; both of which, however, would have failed to produce the results that have been attained if, in the arrangements of Providence, there had not been a boundless supply of cotton from the Southern States of America to feed our manufactories with the raw material. Some account, therefore, of the production and supply of cotton is necessary, in order that we may be in some measure able to comprehend the causes of our national progress. In 1791, the production of cotton in America was estimated by Mr. Woodbury, secretary of the United States' Treasury, at 2,000,000 lb.; in 1811, it was 80,000,000 lb.; in 1821, it was 180,000,000 lb.; and in 1831, it was 385,000,000 lbs. Thenceforth the production was estimated in bales, which in 1832 amounted to more than 1,000,000; and in 1839 was upwards of 2,000,000 bales. In the ten years preceding 1845, the annual increase in the growth of cotton in the United States was 100,000 bales. It appears from Mr. Woodbury's tables, that in 1834 sixty-eight per cent. of all the cotton produced in the world was shipped for England. About five-sixths of all the cotton brought into the United Kingdom was produced in the Southern States of America. The significance of this fact becomes more apparent when we consider that more than one-half the value of the exports of the United States consisted of cotton-wool. As the production of cotton increased in America, the price continually declined. In 1820, it was 13d. per lb. In 1830, it was 5d. per lb.; and from 1831 to 1835, it was 6d. per lb. The growth of the trade in cotton has been rapid beyond all precedent in the history of commerce. In the year 1800, the first considerable quantity was obtained from America, when the imports from that quarter were about 16,000,000 lb. In 1840, the imports were more than 500,000,000 lb.

In this case the demand, enormous as it was, produced an adequate supply. But this demand could not possibly have existed without the inventions of Hargreaves, Arkwright, Crompton, and Cartwright, in the improvement of spinning machinery. Without the spinning-jenny and the mule, we could not have competed with the spinners and weavers of India, in the supply of muslins and calicoes. With them, we were enabled to under-sell the Indian manufacturers in their own markets; so that, in 1842, we exported to India and Ceylon cotton and cotton-yarn, to the value of £3,000,000 sterling. Mr. Baines has shown, in his "History of the Cotton Manufacture," that the cotton plant was extensively cultivated, and its produce manufactured, by the Moors of Spain in the tenth century. The clothes made were mostly of coarse texture; the name fustian, from the Spanish word *fusta*, signifying "sub-

stance," was borrowed from the Spanish weavers, and is still used to denote a strong fabric made of cotton. The art was brought to England about the beginning of the seventeenth century, by protestant refugees. The first mention of it was made by Lewis Roberts, in the "Treasure of Traffic," published in 1641, which says: "The town of Manchester buys cotton-wool from London that comes from Cyprus and Smyrna, and weaves the same into fustians, vermillion, and dimities." Previous to the introduction of Arkwright's invention the cotton manufacture had attained but little importance in this kingdom. The material was purchased in small quantities by the hand-loom weavers, dispersed in cottages throughout the country, and there, like the linen-weavers of Ulster, they carried their goods to market and sold them to the dealers. The manufacture made a great stride in advance, in consequence of the invention of Samuel Crompton, which was called the "mule." It reduced the price of fine yarns from twenty guineas per lb. to fourteen shillings, giving 200 hanks to the pound, each measuring 840 yards, so that a good workman could produce in a week a thread that would measure 3,050 miles.

In 1817 the number of power looms in Lancashire was estimated at 2,000, of which only about 1,000 were then in employment, and the wages had fallen below the rate at which goods could be produced by machinery. To the power-loom, therefore, the hand-loom weavers gradually gave way. In 1832 there were 80,000 power-looms in Lancashire, employing persons of both sexes and of all ages from nine years upwards, at rates of wages varying from half-a-crown to ten shillings a-week. The lace manufacture was brought to a state of great perfection by means of a machine invented by Mr. Heathcote. His patent expired in 1823, after which the manufacture increased with extraordinary rapidity. The demand for goods increased to an enormous extent, the Nottingham lace-frame turning out goods which rivalled the finest productions of France and the Netherlands—a result, however, which could not have been obtained without the previous invention of the mule-jenny. The occupation of the pillow-lace workers was gone, and the competition which ensued on the unrestricted use of Heathcote's machine rapidly reduced the prices, and placed what was once a costly fabric within the reach of the mass of the community. The number of lace-frames in 1831 was 4,500, and of these 3,500 were hand-machines, 700 of which were possessed by workmen themselves. These machines worked up annually 1,600,000 lb. of Sea Island cotton, which were spun into 1,000,000 lb. of yarn, value half a million sterling, and gave employment to 55 spinning factories at Manchester, containing 860,000 spindles. Lace thread has become an article of great consumption, not only in the manufacture of lace, but also in the mixture of wool and silk. It was calculated that 208,000 persons were employed in the different branches of this manufacture—in spinning the yarn at Manchester, weaving the goods in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, and in the embroidery of them executed in different parts of the United Kingdom. The value of this product as it comes from the frame was estimated at £1,891,875. About four-fifths of the whole were exported to the Continent in

an unembroidered state. The total value of the lace goods and of the work performed upon them in this country has been estimated at the immense sum of £3,417,700. In 1817 the estimated number of persons employed in the spinning of cotton in Great Britain was 110,763, and the quantity of yarn produced was under 100,000,000 lb.; in 1853 the yarn spun was nearly 700,000,000 lb. In 1838 the total number of cotton factories in Great Britain and Ireland was 1,815, of which there were in England and Wales, 1,599; in Scotland, 192; in Ireland, 24. The total number of persons employed in these factories was 206,000, of whom 145,934 were females.

The social effects of the cotton trade were great and extensive. A commodity which had been brought at great expense from India, and was counted among the luxuries of the wealthy, became an article of general use amongst the people, even the poorest. As the manufacture progressed, extending employment, accumulating capital, and increasing consumption, there was manifest a growing improvement in the condition of all classes of the community. The new machinery—against which there was a blind prejudice at first, which led to the destruction of the machines—so far from diminishing the demand for labour, increased it to a vast extent. Hands could not be employed in sufficient numbers to supply the new machinery in the multiplying branches of the manufacture. The wages of labour consequently rose rapidly, the effects of which were felt in connection with every description of employment. The consequence was a general elevation in the condition of the whole mass of the working classes, and an extension of the comforts, and even the luxuries of life, to a degree that was never known before. The higher classes experienced a corresponding elevation. The increased consumption acted materially upon the agricultural interest. The improved circumstances and augmenting numbers of the working classes, with the rapid circulation of money resulting from constant employment and good wages, caused a vastly increased consumption of agricultural produce. More bread, more milk and butter, more butcher's meat, more vegetables of all sorts were required, and the consequence was a great rise in the prices of all those articles. Land, therefore, became much more valuable, rents were higher and better paid, and the incomes of landed proprietors were increased immensely in the manufacturing districts, as the direct result of inventions in machinery by men who, in many cases, reaped little or no advantage from their ingenious contrivances, and some of whom died in penury and obscurity. In fact, it is to the genius of such men chiefly that England owes her manufacturing and commercial greatness, on which depends mainly her power as a state, and her influence among the nations of the earth. The high rate of wages in America, and the comparative inaptitude of the people for manufacturing industry, will always counterbalance the advantage derived from the possession of the raw material. The position of England as compared with the continental nations, with regard to facility for the conveyance of cotton by means of steam navigation, will always give her an advantage in this respect. They did what they could in the way of competition, and the result in 1836 was that Great Britain

consumed 350,000,000 lb. of cotton; Russia, Germany, Holland and Belgium, consumed 57,000,000; France, 118,000,000; Spain, none; countries bordering on the Adriatic, 28,000,000; the United States of North America, 86,000,000. The vast superiority of England has been maintained and increased ever since.

The chief seats of the hosiery manufacture are in the counties of Derby, Nottingham, and Leicester. The number of stocking-frames in England in 1812 was under 30,000, showing an increase in thirty years of only 10,000. Mr. Felkin gives an estimate for 1833, from which it appears that there were 33,000 frames in England, producing 3,510,000 dozen a-year, and consuming 8,137,000 lb. of cotton, yarn, worsted, and silk, valued at £814,000; the wages for making them amounting to £948,000, and for finishing, £229,000; the total value being little short of £2,000,000 sterling, and the total value of the materials £560,000. The total number of persons employed in the making of stockings was 73,000. The total of fixed capital engaged in the manufacture was £385,000, and of floating capital £1,050,000. The quantity of cotton hosiery goods made in 1833 was estimated by Mr. Felkin to have increased more than fifty per cent. in the preceding twenty years.

The bobbin net manufacture, which is altogether of modern growth, has extended so much, that it gave employment to 200,000 persons, whose wages amounted to £2,500,000 in 1834, according to a memorial presented to the lords of the treasury by the principal manufacturers and merchants engaged in that business. The total capital employed in the bobbin net trade in 1836 was £1,932,000; the number of machines employed about 3,400. Mr. Felkin furnished the following particulars respecting this interesting branch of manufacture, showing the position in which it stood in 1844. There were forty-five factories, 1,750 steam power machines, and 1,450 hand-machines. The fixed capital was about £760,000, and the floating capital £1,320,000, giving a total of £2,080,000. The cheapness of these beautiful fabrics, says Mr. Felkin, is calculated to excite astonishment. A yard in length of 12 quarter wide plain net may now be bought for 1s.; a yard of plait net of the same width is worth from 20s. to £5. Fancy goods of all qualities from ½d. to 20s. per yard are at all times being made, and often in the same establishment. The sum paid in wages during 1844 was about £165,000; the total number of persons employed in the trade was 5,800.*

Since the reign of Edward III. various efforts have been made by the English government, by means of protection, to establish the silk-trade in this country. The English silk manufacturers had by law the exclusive possession of the home market, which was necessary to keep them from being driven out of it by foreign competition. When a trade is thus protected, there is not much regard to economy in the production, and the cost to the consumer is such as to confine it very much to the wealthier classes. The silk trade in England, bolstered up by artificial means, was continually in a languishing condition. The manufacturer did not rely upon his own skill and exertions, and

*Porter's "Progress of the Nation," p. 209.

had no motive to introduce improvements. Since the protection was removed, the imports of the raw material and the exports of the manufactured article have rapidly increased. In 1825 the number of silk-loom in England did not exceed 24,000. In 1855 the number had increased to 110,000, producing goods to the value of £8,800,000. The greatest importation of raw and thrown silk which took place in any one year previous to the abandonment of the prohibitory system was in 1833, when the quantity im-

and looms were multiplied, and all were kept in active operation. In fact, although the number of spindles had nearly doubled in a short time, it was impossible for the throwsters to keep pace with the demands of the weavers, who were frequently waiting during whole months for silk, to enable them to complete the orders they had in hand. In the ten years preceding 1824 the quantity of raw and thrown silk used by our manufacturers was on an average of 1,882,311 lb. per annum. In the ten succeeding years



THE COTTON PLANT.

ported was 2,432,286 lbs., while the average in recent years has been six times that amount. The total value of silk manufactured goods exported from England in 1844 was £736,455, whereas in 1858 it was £2,391,506.

In 1824 the protective system began to be relaxed. The duty of 5s. 6d. per lb. upon raw silk was reduced to 3d., and ultimately to 1d. The duty of 14s. 8d. upon thrown silk was reduced first to 7s. 6d., and afterwards to 3s. 6d. The result of these reductions was an immediate and rapid increase in the consumption of silk goods. Throwing mills

the average was nearly double, viz., 95 per cent. higher; and in the sixteen years which ended in 1849, there was an increase of 120 per cent. over the quantity used under the restrictive system. Under that system the English throwsters charged 10s. per lb.; but foreign competition brought down the charge to 3s., and from that to 5s., according to the quality of the silk. The home manufacturer was, however, protected by an *ad valorem* duty of 30 per cent. When our markets were thrown open to the products of foreign looms, loud and vehement were the predictions of

persons well acquainted with the trade, that the measure would bring certain ruin upon the manufacturers of England. But in this case, as well as in so many others, experience proved how utterly groundless were the

apprehensions of the monopolists.

They did not see that, if they

could not command high prices, they would have

a more extended market, quick

returns, and in the end larger

profits, or that by competition

such improvements would be

effected in the machinery, and

in the processes of manufacturing,

as would enable them to rival the finest

productions of foreign looms.

The truth that the silk-weaving

business was under the old system

very precarious, and the complaints

of the silk-weavers, that they were on the

verge of ruin, was as common for

half a century as that of the farmers

and the ship-owners. According to the

report of the inspectors of factories, there

were, in 1835, 231 silk factories

in England, six in Scotland, and one

in Ireland. They employed

2,486 boys between the ages

of eight and

twelve, and 3,925 girls of that tender age.

There were 2,663 children between twelve and thirteen years of age.

The total number of females employed was over 20,000,

and the number of both sexes was about 31,000. Smuggling has been always carried on very extensively in

connection with the silk trade. From the year 1827 to 1843 not more than half the silk shipped from France paid duty. The duty received during that period, which was at the rate of 19s. 9d. per lb., was

SCENE ON A COTTON PLANTATION. GATHERING COTTON.



£3,136,691, so that the revenue during that period was defrauded to that amount. Had the duty during that time been 10s., the revenue would have been as good, and the consumer would have gained 9s. 9d. per lb. in the price of the manufactures produced and imported. These amounted

to 79,217,862 lb., including all qualities, which gives a sum of £38,618,708 lost to the great bulk of the community in seventeen years, caused by the operation of excessive duties imposed for the supposed benefit of only one branch of manufactures, and which those engaged in it have continually declared to be in a condition of adversity.*

Woollen manufacture is the ancient staple of England, said by tradition to have been introduced by the Romans. It is certain from history that broadcloths were made in England as early as the close of the twelfth century. But most of the cloth worn in this country then, and long after, was imported from Flanders, and our home manufacture was much indebted to the skill of Flemish settlers. From 1660 down to 1825 the government, acting upon false principles of political economy, strictly prohibited the exportation of British wool, on the mistaken notion that we should thereby secure to ourselves a superiority in the manufacture of certain fabrics. As soon as the French got the combing wool of England, they certainly did exceed us in the quality of the goods produced. But this fact whetted the ingenuity of British manufacturers, and the consequence was that we produced articles equally good, and greatly extended our market. During the five years after the removal of the restriction, we added more than 200,000 to the number of pieces exported, and the export went on increasing until 1840, when it reached 2,128,212, being double the quantity exported annually during the last five years, when the prohibition existed. But the home demand has been always much greater than the foreign, so that it is not easy to estimate the extent of the manufacture. The total number of woollen and worsted factories at work in 1835 was returned by the inspectors of factories as being 1,313, showing an increase of ten per cent. in four years. The total number of persons employed in them in 1835 was 71,274, on which there was an increase of twenty per cent. up to 1839.

There was a general depression in the price of British wool, in consequence of which a committee of the house of commons was appointed to inquire into the causes. From the evidence which they received, it appeared that the actual number of sheep in England and Wales had increased one-fifth since the year 1800, when it was 19,000,000, yielding about 95,000,000 lb. of wool, or about five pounds for each fleece, including imported wool. It was estimated that the quantity used for manufacturing purposes increased during the first half of the present century by 115 per cent. Yorkshire is the chief seat of the woollen manufacture, and the best proof of its progress, perhaps, is presented in the state of the population, which, in the whole of the West Riding increased during the first forty years of the present century at the rate of 104 per cent. At the census of 1801 it was 563,953, while the census of 1841 showed it to be 1,154,101. The improvement and progress of the woollen trade has resulted very much from the improvement in the breed of sheep, yielding a larger quantity and finer quality of wool; and in this way the manufacturing trade reacted powerfully upon agri-

culture, showing the close dependence upon one another of all the industrial interests of the country.

The linen trade flourished early in Ireland, and the woollen trade would have flourished also, had it not been repressed by the British legislature. In answer to an address from parliament, king William III. said, "I shall do all that in me is to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and encourage the linen manufacture, and to promote the trade of England." He kept his promise, and the dependent Irish parliament was induced to pass an act prohibiting the exportation of all woollen goods from Ireland to foreign countries, the exportation to England being already prevented by prohibitory duties. The encouragement of the linen trade, by way of compensation, consisted in a bounty on the exportation of Irish linen, which existed till 1830. In the year 1800 the total exports of linen from Ireland amounted to 34,500,000 yards. From that time there was a steady increase, and in 1825 the quantity exported was 55,000,000 yards. After this year the commercial intercourse between the two parts of the United Kingdom was so identified—the Irish stream flowing into the English river—that no separate account was taken. The exports from the United Kingdom of all kinds of linen goods, and of flax yarn, amounted, in 1834, to the total declared value of £2,579,658. The quantities of Irish linen shipped in subsequent years has been continually increasing. The inspectors appointed by the linen board in Dublin, in a statement which was given in the appendix to the report upon the linen manufacture of Ireland, made by a committee of the house of commons in 1825, have given the latest authentic account within the period under review of the value of the linen goods sold in the different markets of Ireland. It was for three years ending in 1824, and it gave the following results for the different provinces in that year:—Ulster, £2,109,309; Leinster, £192,888; Munster, £110,421; Connaught, £168,090. Total, £2,580,709.

The manufacture of linen made great progress in Scotland, especially in the town and neighbourhood of Dundee. In 1814 the quantity of flax imported into Dundee for use in the factories did not exceed 3,000 tons; but in 1831 it was 15,000 tons, and in 1833 it was nearly 18,000 tons, including 3,380 tons of hemp. The quantity of linen sail cloth and bagging into which this material was made, and which was shipped from Dundee in the same year, amounted to 60,000,000 yards. The manufacture of linen has increased rapidly in England, and the improvement of the quality has been something wonderful, owing to the perfection of the machinery. The length of a pound of yarn of average fineness in 1814 was only 3,330 yards; but in 1833 a pound of the average quality contained 11,170 yards; the yarn of that quality having during twenty years fallen to one-ninth of the price; the raw material having been reduced in price at the same time about one-half. The English manufacturers embarked to so large an extent in the linen trade, that they became large exporters of linen yarn to Ireland and also to France. The export of linen yarn is a new branch of trade, resulting from the perfection in the spinning machinery. In past times, and even so late as 1827, our weavers used nearly 4,000,000 lb. of foreign

* Porter's "Progress of the Nation," p. 223.

yarn, but the importation gradually diminished. Our exports of linen fabrics to the United States, where our principal market is found, amounted in 1848 to nearly 31,000,000 yards, the declared value of which was £859,479.

The following statistics will give a comprehensive view of the state of the linen manufacture in the United Kingdom. The total number of factories at work in England in 1850 was 152; in Scotland, 170; in Ireland, 25: total in the United Kingdom, 347. The number in the West Riding of Yorkshire was 64, more than double the whole number then in Ireland. It is a singular fact that there was then no linen factory in Wales. The total number of persons employed in the trade was 33,283, of whom 22,888 were females, about half of the number being under 18 years of age, upwards of 2,000 between twelve and thirteen years, and more than 600 between eight and twelve. The proportions in which persons of different ages were employed in each of these four branches of industry in 1835 was nearly the same in cotton and flax. In wool the employment of young children under twelve years of age was double the number in the others, and in the silk trade it was more than six times the number. The largest proportion of adults was employed in the cotton trade, amounting to 57 per cent. of the whole. In 1839 there were no children under nine years of age employed in factories, except a few in the silk trade. The proportion of adults was nearly the same.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

National Progress (continued)—Mines—Iron—Coals—Mineral Produce—Mining Population—The Workers in Metals—Hardware—Birmingham—Sheffield—Exportation of Cutlery, &c.—Restrictions on Artisans, and on the Exportation of Machinery—Internal Communication—English Way—Power—Advantage of Water Communication—Iron Consumed on Roads—Horse Power—Macadamized Roads—Progress in Road Making—Bridges—Civilising Effect of Roads in Ireland—The Old Roads in England—The Horsham Road—The Great Western Road—Holloway—The North Road—The Sussex Ways—Kennington—Road between Preston and Wigan—The Oxford Stage Coach—A "Fast Coach"—Effects of different Modes of Travelling upon National Manners and Habits—Primitive Stage Coaches—Carriage of Goods—Inequality of Prices—Internal Commerce—Fairs—Extension of Turnpike Roads—Rapid Increase of Travelling in the Reign of George IV.—Mail Coaches—The Railway System: its Origin and Progress—Immense Capital embarked in Railways—Railway Accidents—Railway Legislation—Enormous Parliamentary Expenses and Compensation for Land—The Railway Mania—Employment on Railways—Present Pre-eminence of Great Britain in the Mechanical and Industrial Arts—Inland Navigation—Steam Navigation: its Origin and Progress: its Social Advantages—Immense Increase of Travelling by Steamers—Steam Communication with the Continent and with India—The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company—The Development of the Coasting Trade—Improved Communication between England and Ireland—The Old System of Travelling to Ireland—The Route by Holyhead—The Welsh Roads—The New Road constructed by Mr. Telford—The Menai and Conway Suspension Bridges—The Harbours of Holyhead and Kingstown—Rapidity and Economy of the Present Modes of Travelling—Immense Traffic by Steamers across the Channel from most of the Ports of Ireland.

AMONG the resources of Great Britain to which she is mainly indebted for her pre-eminence as a manufacturing nation, and without which she would not have been able to make anything like the progress she has made, or to bid defiance to foreign competition as she may always do, are her mines of coal and iron. Of all the minerals employed

for the advancement of civilisation, iron is the most important, and contributes in the largest measure to human progress. But in order to render it available, coals are necessary. These two elements of national prosperity a bountiful Providence has given to Great Britain in the richest abundance. With her inexhaustible iron and coal mines, and with skill and capital to turn them to account, there can be hardly any limit to the material advancement of the country.

It is not known at what period iron was first made in this country. It is certain, however, that iron works were established by the Romans in the forest of Dean, and other parts of the island. This branch of industry continued to be carried on in various localities; but with very little energy, until pit coal was substituted for timber, as fuel in the smelting furnaces. Lord Dudley discovered the practicability of this change in 1619; but ignorant prejudice prevented its general adoption, until about 1740, in which year, the quantity of iron produced in England and Wales was estimated at 17,350 tons, and the number of furnaces was 59. Soon after, coke was used in smelting; and in 1796 there were in England and Wales 104 furnaces, producing about 109,000 tons; and in Scotland 17 furnaces, producing 16,000 tons. In 1806 the produce had increased to 250,000 tons annually. The total produce of all the British iron works was found, after a careful estimate, to be, in 1823, 442,066 tons; in 1825, 581,367 tons; in 1828, 702,584, and in 1830, 653,417 tons. In 1844 the quantity reached 1,500,000 tons. According to the evidence given before a parliamentary committee in that year, the annual produce, excluding Ireland, was 1,396,400 tons. The quantity of tin produced in England in 1820 was 3,578 tons; in 1834 it was 4,000 tons. In addition to the quantities used at home, there has been a considerable exportation of tin plates, the value of which in 1820 was about £161,000, and in 1840 it was more than £360,000. The produce of the copper mines of Cornwall has been much greater than that of the tin mines; for while in 1820 it was only 7,364 tons, it had increased in 1840 to 11,000 tons. The increase during 60 years had been threefold, and the value annually raised exceeded £1,000,000 sterling.

The value of the mineral products of England mainly depends upon our home supply of coals, and but for our command of fuel the most appropriate for working metals, our iron mines must long since have ceased to be worked, and all the branches of industry dependent upon them must have wanted the mainspring of their action, and have come to a standstill. Yet on the other hand it is evident, that but for the inventions by which iron has been converted into the most powerful machines, and from steam a power has been created by which alone coal-mines could have been rendered available for the vast demands of industrial progress, our coal-beds would be of little use. By the consumption of one bushel of coals in the furnace of a steam-boiler, a force is produced which in a few minutes will raise 20,000 gallons of water from a depth of 350 feet, which would take twenty men a whole day to accomplish by means of a common pump. The wonderful effect produced by an invention—by a

happy thought conceived in the mind of a man of genius, and realised by the experiments of a practical philosopher—may be seen in the safety-lamp of Sir Humphry Davy—a discovery which has not only saved a great number of human lives, but has caused the re-opening and the working of many collieries, which otherwise would have been utterly useless. In 1830, before a committee of the house of commons, professor Sedgwick stated that a great deal of coal appeared formerly to have been left underground, in consequence of a want of general plans, or maps of underground workings. A number of excavations, had taken place, independently of each other; the consequence of which was that there were a great number of piers, or large barriers between the old coal works. It was the custom to leave large pillars of coal, in order to support the roof; so that at the depth of 100 fathoms little more than forty per cent. was abstracted, and the rest was abandoned. In some mines wooden pillars were substituted; and in the course of time a system of artificial propping was brought into operation, by means of which, and with the aid of Sir Humphry Davy's safety lamp, every particle of coal can now be got out of the mine before it is abandoned. In the year 1820 the quantity of coals shipped from the port of Newcastle was more than 2,000,000 tons. In the year 1840 it had increased to nearly 3,000,000. From the port of Sunderland the quantity shipped in 1820 was considerably more than 1,000,000. In 1840 it was 1,300,000 tons. Large quantities have also been shipped from the port of Stockton. The chief coal districts have naturally become the chief manufacturing districts; and as the coal is on the spot, it is impossible to estimate the quantities consumed in working the factories in Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire, Nottingham, Derby, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Leicester, Coventry, and Staffordshire. Other inland manufacturing districts are supplied by the numerous canals and railroads which intersect the country. The quantity of coals carried by canals and railways is roughly estimated at upwards of 10,000,000 tons annually. The importance of having such a vast supply of coals for the working of our iron-mines will be seen from the fact that four tons of coals are required for smelting one ton of iron; and the quantity of iron produced in the country amounts to about 2,000,000 tons annually; so that 8,000,000 tons of coals are consumed in the single process of producing pig or cast iron, not to speak of the quantities required for converting this into bar iron, and into the various articles of hardware. The town of Sheffield alone, it was estimated in 1835, required for manufacturing purposes about 515,000 tons of coals. If our coal-mines be essential for manufacturing purposes, how inexpressibly important must they be for domestic purposes. Few persons of right feeling are insensible to the charm of the English fireside, with all its happy and sacred associations of family and home. What should we have done in this cold, moist climate without coals for cooking purposes, and for keeping up the warmth of our dwellings? In Ireland the turfbogs supply peat to a large extent for this purpose; but even in that country, and especially in the towns, English coals are extensively used for fuel, and are purchased at

the sea-ports at average prices, varying from 14s. to 20s. a-ton.

If charcoal were used for mining purposes, all the forests in the world would be insufficient to supply the demand. Even as it is, the quantity of timber consumed in connection with mining operations is astounding. The total quantity of timber in use for mining purposes in Cornwall would require no less than 140 square miles of forest, of Norwegian pines, averaging a growth of 120 years. In 1836 the consumption of timber for mines was estimated at 36,200 loads, or 141,800 trees. The cost of timber imported in the same year was £176,000, the drawback and the duties of which amounted to nearly £82,000. The cost of timber for the Devon and Cornish mines in that year amounted to about £94,000. The advantages of Great Britain, in point of situation, enable her to compete successfully with all foreign countries, and, indeed, to put all rivals out of the market. Her insular position enables the coal to be conveyed at a minimum cost wherever it is wanted, and affords the greatest facility for the shipping of iron to all parts of the world; and though she is obliged to import the finer kinds of iron, for the manufacture of steel, to the extent of 32,000 tons a year, yet she exports annually 200,000 tons. Dr. Buckland, in his address to the Geological Society, in 1840, stated that "the average value of the annual produce of the mines of the British islands amounts to the enormous sum of £20,000,000, of which about £8,000,000 arises from iron, and £9,000,000 from coals." Sir Henry De la Bèche, in 1851, gave the estimate of the raw mineral produce of Great Britain and Ireland as £24,000,000, or about four-ninths of that of all Europe, including these islands, the coal being estimated at the pit's mouth, the iron in the pig, and so on. It appears that the produce is increasing: Mr. Hunt gave an estimate, taken from the government geological survey for 1853 and 1854. The latter year yielded the largest amounts. The following are the items:—Of 1854: iron (pig), £9,500,000; copper, £1,229,807; lead, £1,472,115; tin, £690,000; silver, £192,500; zinc, £16,500; coal at pit's mouth, £14,975,000; other minerals, as Nichol's sulphur and arsenic, £500,000. Total, £28,575,922; and the quantity, 64,661,401 tons.

The number of persons employed in British mining, men and women, of all ages, is:—Coal, 219,995; iron, 26,106; copper, 21,169; tin, 14,764; lead, 21,769; zinc, &c., 174. Total, 303,977.

Among the mining population the number of males employed under twenty years of age is 86,647; the number of females under twenty years of age is 5,000; and the total number of females is about 9,000. Mr. Whitney, an American gentleman, has attempted to give a complete view of the value of the metallic produce of the world in the year 1854, which is to be regarded only as an approximation to the truth. It will be sufficient for our purpose to take it in round numbers of millions sterling:—Great Britain, £20,000,000; the United States, £16,000,000; Australia, £8,000,000; Mexico, £6,000,000; Russian empire, £5,000,000; Prussian, £4,000,000; France, £3,000,000; South America, £7,000,000; Belgium, £2,000,000; Spain, £1,500,000; Sweden and Norway, £1,000,000.

Austrian mines are worth only about a quarter of a million annually; and the other countries of Europe are scarcely worth counting.

The public have a general idea of what the nation owes to the workers in metals; but it requires the study of statistics to be able to realise it fully, or to appreciate the progress that has been made in those branches of manufacturing industry since the reign of George III. The progress in the manufacture of hardware is strikingly exhibited by the increase of the population of Birmingham. According to the census of 1821, it was 106,722; in 1831 it was 146,986; in 1841 it was 181,116, showing an increase of 80 per cent. in twenty years. The number of houses during the same period was nearly doubled. Mr. Babbage has given a table, extracted from the books of a highly respectable house in Birmingham, showing the reduction in the price of various articles made of iron between 1812 and 1832, which varied from 40 to 80 per cent. The exportation of cutlery from England amounted in 1820 to about 7,000 tons; in 1839 it was 21,000 tons. Since 1820 the annual value of the exportations of hardware and cutlery increased about 50 per cent. The town of Sheffield is another remarkable instance of the growth of population in consequence of the manufacture of cutlery. In 1821 the population was 65,275; in 1841 it was 111,000. The various manufacturers of cutlery and plated goods, and the conversion of iron into steel, employed in 1835 upwards of 560 furnaces. The original conversion of metal into blistered steel caused the consumption of about 12,000 tons of coal in the form of coke; while the subsequent processes required an additional quantity of 38,000 tons. The total consumption of coals, including those used for domestic purposes, in the town of Sheffield, in 1835 was more than 500,000 tons; the whole of it being found in the immediate neighbourhood, and forming but one-third of the expense of converting and casting steel, for which five-sixths of the iron is imported, the native product not being sufficiently fine. The declared value of British-made plated ware, jewellery, and watches, exported from the United Kingdom in 1827 was £169,456; in 1839 it amounted to £258,076.

All nations have been intensely selfish with regard to manufacturing skill. They have jealously guarded their inventions from each other as long as they could, endeavouring to make as much profit as possible out of the exclusive possession. England until lately has not been more liberal than her neighbours, nor less vigilant in guarding her monopoly by restrictive laws. The first act of the English parliament for preventing the exportation of machinery was passed in 1696. Similar acts were passed at various times in subsequent reigns, and so late as 1824 resolutions were passed by a committee of the house of commons appointed to inquire into the state of the law of the United Kingdom and its consequences respecting artisans leaving the kingdom and residing abroad, reported as follows:—First, it appeared by the evidence that notwithstanding the laws enacted to prevent the seduction of artisans to go abroad, many able and intelligent artisans had gone abroad to reside and to exercise their respective arts in foreign countries; and that it was extremely difficult, if not

impossible, in this country, by any mode of executing the existing laws, or by any new law, to prevent artisans who might be so determined from going out of the country; that the artisans complained of the partial and oppressive operation of those laws, which aimed at preventing their taking their labour and art to the best market, while all other classes of the community might go abroad, and take their capital wherever they would; that many British artisans residing abroad had been prevented from returning home from the opinion that they had, by going abroad, violated the laws of their country, and rendered themselves liable to punishment, and that in the opinion of the committee it was both unjust and impolitic to continue those laws. They, therefore, recommended their entire repeal, so that artisans might be at liberty to go abroad and to return home. Shortly after the law was altered, so that mechanics were no longer imprisoned in their own country. In 1825 permission was also given for the exportation of all the common articles of machinery; but there was a number still prohibited, the Board of Trade having a discretionary power to relax the prohibition. This policy of restriction was the subject of protracted investigation by parliamentary committees in 1824 and 1825. The concluding paragraph of the report published in the last year is as follows:—"Although your committee are impressed with the opinion that tools and machinery should be regulated on the same principles as other articles of manufacture; yet, inasmuch as there exist objections in the minds of many of our manufacturers on this subject which deserve the attention of the legislature, it is possible that circumstances may exist which may render expedient a prohibition to export certain tools and machines used in some particular manufactures."

In consequence of the dissatisfaction felt by the manufacturers of machinery and implements, the subject was considered by another committee of the house of commons; and ultimately a clause was inserted in the Customs Duty Bill, 6 and 7 Vic., by which the exportation of machinery was rendered as free as any other British manufacture. The value of machinery shipped to foreign countries in 1831 was only £29,000; in 1836, it was £166,000; in 1837, £280,000; and in 1840, £374,000, the increase continuing till in 1848 it reached £588,000. "In the extraordinary state of progression," says Mr. Porter, "that has attended the various branches of our staple manufactures, and our mining operations, the system of prohibition, as affecting the exportation of machinery, has not produced so much effect as might have been expected upon the prosperity of our machinists. The trade has partaken of the general extension, but certainly not to the degree that would have attended it under a different system. Our engineers and millwrights may be said to have as much work upon their hands as the number of their workmen enables them to undertake; and skilled artisans such as they must employ are not to be formed without a long course of instruction. It would fill many large volumes to describe the numerous inventions which during the present century have imparted facility to our manufacturing processes and given perfection to the articles made. A description of all the improvements which have been made in steam

machinery alone since the beginning of this century would lead to investigations that could be properly entered upon only in a treatise on mechanics."*

In order to the successful development of national resources, it is not only necessary to have facilities for commercial intercourse with foreign nations, an extensive sea-board with good, safe, and commodious harbours, but likewise a good system of internal communication. Without this the price of an article may be doubled or trebled, simply by the cost of carriage from one town to another, and the most valuable productions would be worth little in the absence of cheap modes of conveyance and interchange. It often happens that even within twenty or thirty miles where there are no roads, or only bad ones, and where goods can only be carted, the difference in the price of wheat will be 25 per cent., and in potatoes in Ireland, it was often 50 or 100 per cent., so that there might be a superabundance of provisions in one place, and dearth in another, not many miles off. There is nothing in respect to which England is so much an object of envy as in this matter of internal communication. Being surrounded by seas, with such an irregular outline of coast, she is unrivalled in the number and excellence of her harbours, and in the extent of her water communication. But her internal communication by means of roads and canals is a still more admirable exhibition of skill, industry, and persevering energy. If we could take a bird's eye view of the whole country from a balloon, we should behold it a complete net-work of roads and canals, all alive with commerce—one vast hive of industry laid bare to the view. This intersection of the island for the purpose of communication is rendered more easy by the numerous inlets of the sea. For example, there is no spot south of the county of Durham at a greater distance than fifteen miles of water conveyance, while in the greater part of the area the distance is not more than ten miles, and all the principal seats of our manufactures have their arteries in canals and navigable rivers, maintaining easy communication with the great commercial ports. By this means the raw materials of the manufactures are laid down at the doors of the factories at a slight charge, and the finished goods conveyed away with economy and rapidity for distribution through the markets of the world. This is what the French call our *viabilité immense*, our vast and unrivalled *way power*, by which heavy and bulky materials, such as iron and coals, the great elements of manufacturing success, can be cheaply conveyed from place to place. A curious fact has been mentioned in connection with one element of cost with regard to the roads and conveyances in France, as showing the great advantage of water communication. Messrs. Villiers and Bowring, in their report on the commercial relations between France and Great Britain, calculate that 1,500,000 ploughs are used in France, which consumed iron to the value of £2,700,000 before its importation was permitted from England. There is also an enormous quantity of iron consumed in the wear and tear of travelling on public roads. It was stated before a committee of the house of commons in 1833, that every

coach which travelled between London and Birmingham lost about 11 lbs. of wrought iron along the road between those two places, although it was unusually level and kept in perfect repair. How much greater must be the wear and tear to the wheels of carriages and the shoes of horses upon rough roads like those upon the Continent. This material of iron alone, then, must have added greatly to the cost of internal communication on the Continent, not to speak of the enormous horse-power that was required, and which so greatly enhanced the price of all the products of industry.

The construction of common roads has been greatly improved in the United Kingdom by the general adoption of the plan of Mr. Macadam, who has given his name to the process of substituting stones broken small for the old rough pavement. We read with astonishment of the state of English roads a century ago, of carriages breaking down and sticking fast in deep ruts, and of days passed in a journey which now only occupies as many hours. Yet in early times England was better off in this respect than other countries. Of all the proofs of social progress which our country now exhibits to such a marvellous extent on every side, there is nothing more decisive or more wonderful than the rapidity with which we have improved and extended our internal communication. From 1818 to 1839 the length of turnpike roads in England and Wales was increased by more than 1,000 miles. In the former year England and Wales contained paved streets and turnpike roads to the extent of 19,725 miles. The other public highways extended to 95,000 miles, making altogether nearly 115,000 miles, occupying about 540 square miles of ground, or 482,000 acres. Scotland also made great progress in the construction of highways from the commencement of the century. Since the appointment of its board of works in 1803, no less than 1,186 miles of road were added, and more than 1,000 bridges were constructed. Mr. Griffith, now Sir Richard Griffith, speaking of the state of internal communication in Ireland in 1822, said, "The fertile plains of Limerick, Cork, and Kerry are separated from each other by a deserted country, hitherto nearly an impassable barrier. This large district comprehends upwards of 200 square miles; in many places it is very populous. As might be expected under such circumstances, the people are turbulent, and their houses being inaccessible for want of roads, it is not surprising that during the disturbances of 1821 and 1822 this district was an asylum for white-boys, smugglers, and robbers, and the stolen cattle were drawn into it as to a safe and impenetrable retreat." Roads were constructed through that wild district, and in seven years a great social change was effected. Upwards of sixty new lime-kilns had been built; carts, ploughs, harrows, and improved implements had become common; houses of a better class had been built; new inclosures had been made, and the country had become perfectly tranquil, exhibiting a scene of industry and exertion at once pleasing and remarkable. A large portion of the money received for labour on the public works had been husbanded with care, and some poor labourers had been enabled to take farms, build houses, and stock their lands. In a report which Mr. Nimmo made in 1824, referring to a part of the county of

* "Progress of the Nation," p. 266.

Kerry, he said, "A few years ago there was hardly a plough, car, or carriage of any kind. Butter, the only produce, was carried to Cork on horseback; there was not one decent public-house, and only one house slated and plastered in the village, the nearest post-office, thirty miles distant. Since the new road was made there were built in three years upwards of twenty respectable two-storey houses, a shop with cloth, hardware, and groceries, a comfortable inn, a post-office, Bridewell, a new chapel, a quay covered with limestone for manure, a salt work, two stores for oats, and a considerable traffic in linen and yarn." In 1841 the population exceeded 1,500 souls, and the number of houses increased to 250. Such were the effects of making about seventy miles of new road on a level line. The

place of refuge, and of affording them at the same time resources for an active, honest industry, of which they showed no indisposition to avail themselves. "Traversing a country covered with farms, and in a high state of cultivation, showing every sign of a good soil, and of amply remunerating produce, it becomes difficult to credit the fact that ten or twelve years since the whole was a barren waste, the asylum of miserable and lawless peasantry, who were calculated to be a burden, rather than a benefit, to the nation; and that this improvement may entirely be attributed to the expenditure of a few thousand pounds in carrying a good road of communication through the district."

We shall be less surprised at the extraordinary effects



MR. JOHN RENNIE.

flourishing town thus created is Cahirciveen, in the vicinity of Derrynane, the celebrated mountain home of the late Mr. O'Connell. The great agitator had thus before his eyes an exhibition of what could be accomplished by a wise government directing its energies to practical improvement, in contrast with the barren results of political agitation, having for its object only to gratify the ambition of place-seekers.

The Irish Board of Works, in its reports, gives a glowing account of the benefits resulting from the construction of new lines of road through remote and wild districts. These roads have been the means of fertilising deserts, of depriving the lawless disturbers of the public peace of their

produced by the improved means of communication and transit in Ireland, if we bear in mind the revolution effected in England within a century, and the state of things even in the neighbourhood of the metropolis not very long ago. For example, the road from Horsham, in Sussex, was, in the memory of very old men, in such a state that sheep and cattle could not be driven on it to the London market, the consequence of which was that a quarter of a fat ox generally sold for fifteen shillings, and mutton was only five farthings a pound. The effect of making a good macadamised road was, that the journey was travelled in four hours by stage-coaches, of which thirty passed through Horsham every day, on their way to

the metropolis, besides innumerable private carriages, post-chaises, and carts, as well as constant droves of cattle and sheep. The great western road into London was so bad, that in some places, even so near as Knightsbridge, in winter the traveller had to wade through deep mud. Many of the roads into the metropolis were but rutted tracks, through heaths and commons, like the approaches to turf-bogs in Ireland, the deeper holes being occasionally filled up by large stones thrown into them. The country was but partially enclosed, and guides were necessary to strangers to conduct them to the fords, in the absence of bridges; and, to enable them to avoid quagmires, beacons were erected in some places. "In some of the old settled districts of England," says Mr. Samuel Smiles, "old roads are still to be traced in the hollow ways or lanes, which are met with in some places eight or ten feet deep. Horse-tracks in summer and rivulets in winter, the earth became gradually worn into these deep furrows, many of which, in Wilts, Somerset, and Devon, represent the tracks of roads as old, if not older, than the Conquest. They were narrow and deep, fitted only for a horse passing along laden with its croups. Similar roads existed until recently in the immediate neighbourhood of Birmingham—long the centre of considerable traffic. The sandy soil was seen through, as it were, by generation after generation of human feet and by pack-horses, helped by the rains, until in some places the tracks were as much as from twelve to fourteen yards deep; one of these, partly filled up, retaining to this day the name of Holloway Head. In the neighbourhood of London there was also a Hollow-Way, which now gives its name to a populous metropolitan parish. Hogbush Lane was another of such roads. Before the formation of the great north road, it was one of the principal bridle paths reaching from London to the north of England, but it was so narrow as barely to afford passage for a single horseman, and so deep that the rider's head was beneath the level of the ground on either side."

In 1690, Chancellor Cowper described the "Sussex Ways" as bad and ruinous beyond imagination, and said it was melancholy that mankind should inhabit such a heap of dirt for a poor livelihood. "The country was 'a sink of about fourteen miles broad.'" Fuller saw an old lady there being drawn to church in her own coach by the aid of six oxen. Dr. John Burton accounted for the long legs of the Sussex girls by the practice of pulling the foot out of tenacious mud, which strengthened the muscle and lengthened the bone! Lord Hervey, as late as 1736, complained of the road between Kensington and London as being so infamously bad that they lived there in the same solitude as they would if cast upon a rock in the middle of the ocean; and all the Londoners told them that there was between them an impassable gulf of mud. We are not surprised, then, to learn that even the royal carriage bearing majesty took two hours to perform the journey in bad weather, and sometimes stuck fast in a rut. In the fens of Lincoln the country was so often flooded that the people were rowed to church in boats.

In 1770, Arthur Young travelled on the turnpike road

between Preston and Wigan, a sort of trunk line of road, connecting whole counties, which he says one would naturally expect "to be at least decent. But," he adds, "let me most seriously caution all travellers who may accidentally purpose to travel this terrible county, to avoid it as they would the devil, for a thousand to one but they break their necks or their limbs by overthrows or breakings down. They will here meet with ruts which I actually measured four feet deep, and floating with mud, only from a wet summer. What, therefore, must it be after a winter? The only mending it receives in places is the tumbling in some loose stones, which serve no other purpose but jolting a carriage in the most intolerable manner. These are not merely opinions, but facts, for I actually passed three carts broken down in these eighteen miles of execrable memory."

It is only by contrasting our present advantages with the inconveniences and discomforts of our fathers and grandfathers, that we can realise a vivid conception of the wonders of civilisation by which we are surrounded. The mechanic, for example, now travels with a rapidity and comfort which royalty might have envied a few ages ago. Queen Elizabeth travelled for the most part on horseback, sitting on a pillion behind one of her lords. When she rode into the city the lord chancellor occupied this post of honour. She was at length provided with a coach, made by Bodenen, a Dutchman, said to be the first used in England. It was a sort of cart without springs, the body resting upon the axles, which must have fearfully shaken her majesty when passing over a rough pavement. The example was followed by the nobility; and the appearance of one of these coaches, or "wagons," excited as much wonder as the first railway train in a remote rural district. The judges, naturally, availed themselves of this new mode of conveyance, in order to inspire awe, and add dignity to their office. But it often happened that their dignity was sullied by being tumbled in the mud, out of which their carriages had to be dragged by the main force of plough-horses. A stage-wagon soon after came into use, but was so inconvenient and slow that a great advance was made by the introduction of stage-coaches about the seventeenth century, though they travelled only four miles an hour, and their jolting was terrific. Charles II. disliked the stage-coach so much that he went from London to Dover in a wagon, drawn by six horses, tandem, and driven by a wagoner clothed in black, who walked the whole way. In the beginning of the eighteenth century a devout traveller blessed God for his mercy to himself and his family in having brought him safely from Leeds to York, a journey of twenty-four miles, in eight hours; and not without reason, considering the state of the road. When rain fell in some districts, pedestrians, horsemen, and coaches were all obliged to stand still till the floods abated and the roads dried. Yet when stage-coaches were introduced, they were denounced as one of the greatest evils that had come upon society—mischievous to the public, destructive to trade, injurious to the breed of horses, and rendering men so effeminate that they were "not able to endure frost, snow, or rain, or lodge in the fields." And, moreover, stage-coaches were

injurious to trade, because they enabled travellers to dispense with swords, belts, pistols, holsters, portmanteaus, and hat-cases. Persons were able thus to get from York, Chester, or Exeter, to London in five days; and "when they are there they must be in the mode, have all the new fashions, buy all their clothes there, and go to the plays, balls, and treats, where they get such a habit of jollity, and a love to gaiety and pleasure, that nothing afterwards in the country will serve them, if ever they should fix their minds to live there again; but they must have it from London, whatever it costs."

It would be an interesting subject of study, the effects of modes of travelling upon national manners and habits. In the religious world in the present day, ministers and others, when announcing a sermon or a lecture, or a public meeting, are careful to say, "God willing," or "D.V.," in order to indicate their conscious dependence upon Divine Providence. The same devout precaution was used by the owners of stage coaches in the times of our forefathers. They were advertised to start, "God willing," and as it seemed good, at or "about" a certain time. The coach was said to have slept at certain places night after night on the way, and towards the end of the journey "the coach was shaved," which operation was sometimes performed by a woman. The want of proper roads, while it made some things, such as farming produce, excessively cheap, made other things excessively dear. London was mostly supplied by sea; but the price of goods conveyed inland from London was enormous, the carriage from London to Birmingham being from £5 to £7 a ton, and from London to Exeter £12. It is needless to remark what facilities this state of things afforded for highway robbery, which was then rather a flourishing occupation. The state of the population in winter, so far as their relations with the outer world were concerned, resembled that of a blockaded city, or an American village snowed up. They laid in a stock of provisions and goods of all sorts for that dreary season, during which the men, when they could not work, passed the time in athletic sports, drinking, or gambling, and the women in sitting round the large blazing fire on the hearth-stone, by the light of which they went on with their spinning and sewing, as windows were then a rare luxury, and candles were neither good nor cheap. When the season opened, the chapmen came in gangs, for mutual protection, upon their pack-horses, in order to supply the various country towns with goods. No one travelled through the country except from necessity, and England was an unknown land to most of its inhabitants. The news of public events travelled very slowly. The death of Queen Elizabeth was not known in Devon till the days of court mourning were ended. The chief means of intercourse were the fairs, which were great festive occasions, on which the population turned out and enjoyed a holiday. Acts of parliament, however, were passed for the construction of good turnpike roads around London, which gave an immense advantage to the farmers and market gardeners who supplied the metropolis with provisions, and constituted a monopoly which, of course, they were very anxious to retain unimpaired. Accordingly, they vehemently protested against the extension of the turnpike

roads into the country. But at last common sense prevailed, and in the course of time engineers and practical scientific men did not think it beneath their dignity to bestow their attention upon road-making. One of the most remarkable and interesting of the memoirs which Mr. Smiles has given us in his valuable work, "The Lives of the Engineers," is that of John Metcalfe, a blind man, commonly known as "Blind Jack of Knaresborough," the constructor of nearly 200 miles of capital roads. It is a singular fact that a blind man should have been the pioneer of social progress, as the first great professional road-maker in England.

When once the work of improvement in a department upon which the industry and progress of the nation so much depended had commenced, and when the spirit of enterprise began to spread among the active minds of the country, the advancement was very rapid. Mr. Porter travelled in 1798 by a fast coach called "The Telegraph," which left Gosport at one o'clock in the morning, and arrived at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross, at eight in the evening, thus proceeding at the rapid rate of four miles an hour. By the improvement of the common roads, and in the construction of vehicles, stage coaches had subsequently attained the speed of ten miles an hour. Upon the stamp office returns for 1834, a calculation was based, which showed that the extent of travelling on licensed conveyances in that year would be equal to the conveyance of one person for a distance of 597,159,420 miles, or more than six times the distance between the earth and the sun. There were, in 1837, in England, fifty-four mail coaches drawn by four horses, and forty-nine by two horses, drawn at an average speed of nine miles an hour. Ireland had at the same time thirty four-horse mails, and Scotland ten.

The first act of parliament for the construction of a railway, or, rather, a tramway, for trucks drawn by horses, was passed in the year 1801. This was the beginning of a system of internal communication which has been developed in the most marvellous manner, and has worked a great social revolution, universal in its effects. The number of railway acts passed during the first half of the century was more than 1,000; and the sums which parliament authorised the various companies to expend in the construction of railways from 1826 to 1849, amounted to the enormous total of £348,012,188, the yearly average being £14,500,508. The Liverpool and Manchester Company was the first that contemplated the conveyance of passengers, which, however, was regarded as a sort of subsidiary traffic, that might produce some £20,000 a-year, the main reliance being on the conveyance of raw cotton, manufactured goods, coals, and cattle. It need not be remarked how widely the result differed from their anticipation. The receipts from passengers in 1840 amounted to £343,910, and it has been estimated that the saving to the public on that line alone is nearly a quarter of a million annually. The aggregate length of railways completed and in use in the United Kingdom at the end of the year 1849, was 5,996 miles, of which 4,656 were in England, 846 in Scotland, and 494 in Ireland. It is stated in the report of the commissioners of railways, dated 10th of July, 1850, that "these 5,996 miles of railway represented a capital of about

£197,500,000, showing an expenditure of about £33,000 per mile in the construction of the line, and the provision of the necessary plant and material for working."

It was at first apprehended that the danger from railway travelling would be very great, in consequence of the speed and the tremendous forces brought into action. But it appears that the danger has been greatly exaggerated. "If the road is perfect," says Captain Huish; "if the engine is perfect; if the carriages are perfect, and I will go on to say, if the signal-man is perfect, and if everything about the railway is perfect, almost any amount of speed that can be got out of an engine may be done with safety." But none of these are perfect, and therefore some accidents are inevitable. The question of railway communication divides itself into two great parts: there is the great commercial principle involved; there is the great public principle of safety and convenience; and the aim of legislation should be, and has been, to bring the former principle in aid of the latter, by making it the interest of railway companies to guard, as far as human precaution can avail, against railway accidents. In the official report of the Railway Commissioners for 1849, the following comparative statement is given, from which it appears that the proportion of the number killed to those conveyed was, in 1848, 1 in 286,934, and in 1849, 1 in 316,047; while the proportion of persons receiving injury short of death was, in 1848, 1 in 264,661; and in 1849, 1 in 341,398. These proportions embrace the whole number of casualties, however arising; but if we take into the account only those cases which resulted from causes beyond the control of the sufferers, we shall find that in 1848 the killed were 1 in 2,520,034, and the injured 1 in 362,255; and that in 1849, the killed were no more than 1 in 3,192,077, and the injured 1 in 665,016. Limiting the calculation to the cases of passengers, the proportion killed from causes beyond their own control was in 1848, 1 in 6,440,087, and in 1849, 1 in 12,768,308; while the proportion injured was, in 1848, 1 in 452,818, and in 1849 1 in 760,048.

One of the most astounding chapters in the history of our modern legislation is the cost of railway acts, and their number, complexity, and contrariety. The London and North-Western Railway alone is regulated by nearly 200 different acts. In 1855 it was shown, by a return of Mr. Hadfield, that the parliamentary, legal, and engineering costs on the then existing railways amounted to £14,000,000. Colonel Wilson Patten, in 1859, showed by a return that the parliamentary expenses alone amounted to more than 3 per cent. The Trent Valley Railway Bill was lost in 1836, because a barn worth £10, though shown in the original plan, was not exhibited upon an enlarged sheet; 450 allegations were made against it before the Standing Orders Committee, and it was doubted if the ultimate cost of making the railway was greater than the cost of obtaining liberty to make it. For one line in 1845 there were eighteen competitors contending before the committee. During that period, when the mania for speculation in railway shares raged, railway legislation was a desperate scramble between speculators, parliamentary agents, and schemers of all sorts, who were encouraged by the legislature in their ruinous proceedings. The cost of obtain-

ing the Great Western Railway Act was £88,710; the London and Birmingham Act, £72,868; and the Eastern Counties Act, £45,190. In the earlier years of railway legislation, the legal and parliamentary expenses have varied from £650 to £3,000 per mile. In one contest £57,000 was spent among six counsel and twenty solicitors. One company alone expended in nine years, in legal and parliamentary expenses, not less than £480,000, averaging £53,300 a-year. Millions have been paid to landowners for ground, which sums have been justly said to be "so much money put into their pockets, as an inducement to allow their property to be increased in value." "Owners of estates," says a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, "once the greatest obstacles to railway enterprise, have of late years been amongst its chief promoters. Since the Liverpool and Manchester line was first defeated by landed opposition, and succeeded with its second bill only by keeping out of sight of all mansions, and avoiding the game preserves; since the time when the London and Birmingham Company, after seeing their project thrown out by a committee of peers who ignored the evidence, had to conciliate their antagonists by raising the estimate for land from £250,000 to £750,000; since the time when parliamentary counsel bolstered up a groundless resistance by the flimsiest and absurdest excuses, even reproaching engineers with having trodden down the corn of widows, and destroyed the strawberry beds of gardeners; since then a marked change of policy has taken place, nor was it in human nature that it should be otherwise. When it became known that railway companies commonly paid for land in compensation sums varying from £4,000 to £8,000 per mile; that men were indemnified for supposed injury to their property by sums so inordinate that the greater part has been known to be returned by the heir as conscience money; that in one case £120,000 was given for land said to be worth but £5,000; when it was bruited abroad that large bonuses, in the shape of preference shares and the like, were granted to buy-off opposition; when it came to be an established fact that estates are greatly enhanced in value by the proximity of railways, it is not surprising that country gentlemen should have become active supporters to schemes to which they were once the bitterest enemies."

The Eastern Counties Railway Company had, up to 1846, paid not less than £809,950 for land in compensation, equal to about £12,000 a mile. The Great Northern, however, eclipsed all others in the amount of its preliminary expenses, which, up to 1857, had reached the enormous sum of £763,077 spent as parliamentary charges for leave to construct 245 miles, being at the rate of £3,115 per mile, while the cost of land and compensation amounted to nearly £2,000,000 sterling. Both charges put together give nearly £11,000 per mile of the original line, being nearly one-fourth of the capital forestalled before the ground was broken. It appeared in evidence before a committee of the commons in 1858, that during the eleven years from 1847 to 1857, the number of railway bills introduced was 913, or 83 per annum, on which committees sat 102 days per annum.

The natural results of this extravagant preliminary expenditure have shown themselves in a variety of ways,

which are most injurious to the interests of the public, and detrimental to the shareholders themselves. Proper means for securing the safety of the passengers have, in too many instances, been neglected, from the crippled resources of the companies, or their, under the circumstances, not unnatural desire to economise. Their servants are, almost as a rule, indifferently paid and overworked; the consequence of which is a want of energy and zeal, and frequently of the physical powers required for the proper performance of their duties. This leads but too often to a serious loss of life and property; and, by entailing on railway companies the payment of large sums as compensation to the injured, or their families, diminishes the already small returns received by the shareholders for the money they have embarked in these undertakings. And, by a strange anomaly, while the profit on the sums actually spent in the construction of railways is large, the interest for the money they have cost is inconsiderable. To obviate this inconvenience, the working expenses are reduced to a minimum, but the security of travellers is diminished to an equal extent; and this, by destroying the confidence of the public in the safety of railways, and exciting the fears of the timid, lessens the traffic, and thus augments the evil it is intended to counteract.

The railway system diverted the currents of traffic from old roads, and from a number of towns and villages through which the old coaches travelled. But, if it destroyed employment in some localities, it created it to a much larger extent in others. A parliamentary return shows the number of persons employed by railway companies in various capacities on the 13th of June, 1849. Secretaries or managers, 156; treasurers, 32; engineers, 107; superintendents, 314; store-keepers, 120; accountants or cashiers, 138; inspectors or time-keepers, 490; station-masters, 1,300; draughtsmen, 103; clerks, 4,021; foremen, 709; engine-drivers, 1,839; assistant drivers or firemen, 1,871; guards or breaksmen, 1,631; artificers, 10,809; switchmen, 1,540; gate-keepers, 1,361; policemen or watchmen, 1,508; porters or messengers, 8,238; plate-layers, 5,508; labourers, 14,029; miscellaneous employment, 144—total, 55,968. At the same date there were 103,816 persons employed on railways under construction.

The advance which Great Britain has made in practical science and the mechanical arts within a single century must strike the mind with astonishment in view of the foregoing record of mechanical achievements. The contrast between the past and the present is well put by Mr. Smiles.

"Our first lessons," he says, "in mechanical and civil engineering were principally obtained from Dutchmen, who supplied us with our first windmills, watermills, and pumping engines. Holland even sent us the necessary labourers to execute our first great works of drainage. The great level of the fens was drained by Vermuyden; and another Dutchman, Freestone, was employed to reclaim the marsh near Wells, in Norfolk. Canary Island, near the mouth of the Thames, was embanked by Joas Croppenburgh and his company of Dutch workmen. When a new haven was required at Yarmouth, Joas Johnson, the Dutch engineer, was employed to plan and construct the

works; and when a serious breach occurred in the banks of the Witham, at Boston, Matthew Hake was sent for from Gravelines, in Flanders, and he brought with him not only the mechanics, but the manufactured iron required for the works. The art of bridge-building had sunk so low in England about the middle of the last century, that we were under the necessity of employing the Swiss engineer, Labeyle, to build Westminster Bridge. In short, we depended for our engineering even more than for our pictures and our music upon foreigners. At a time when Holland had completed its magnificent system of water communication, and when France, Germany, and even Russia had opened important lines of inland navigation, England had not cut a single canal, whilst our roads were about the worst in Europe. It was not until the year 1760 that Brindley began his first canal for the Duke of Bridgewater. After the lapse of a century we find the state of things had become entirely reversed. Instead of borrowing engineers from abroad, we now send them to all parts of the world. British-built steamships ply on every sea; we export machinery to all quarters, and supply Holland itself with pumping engines. During that period our engineers have completed a magnificent system of canals, turnpike roads, bridges, and railways, by which the internal communications of the country have been completely opened up. They have built lighthouses around our coasts, by which ships freighted with the produce of all lands, when nearing our shores in the dark, are safely lighted along to their destined havens; they have hewn out and built docks and harbours for the accommodation of a gigantic commerce, whilst their inventive genius has rendered fire and water the most untiring workers in all branches of industry, and the most effective agents in locomotion by land and sea. Nearly all this has been accomplished during the last century, much of it within the life of the present generation."

England has utilised to the utmost extent her water power in perfecting the system of inland navigation. The canals used for the transport of goods and produce in England alone are estimated at 2,200 miles; while the navigable rivers exceed 1,800 miles, making together more than 4,000 miles of inland navigation. One immense advantage of this kind of navigation is its regularity, its being independent of wind and tide, and its being worked by a power that can be always controlled and regulated according to circumstances. Fortunately for the development of our external communication and our commerce with foreign countries, as well as our coasting trade, the power of steam was applied to navigation just at the time when it was required; and by this power we are enabled to extend the same regularity to our maritime commerce, and to secure to a large extent the same independence of wind and tide, and to be able not only to cross the channels between different parts of the United Kingdom, but to traverse the broad Atlantic with nearly the same punctuality that attends our internal communications. Steam power has been made as tractable and subservient in the hands of science as horse power, or as human labour. The first steamboat that was worked for hire in this kingdom was the Comet, a small vessel with an engine of three horse

power. Two years later the Elizabeth, of eight horse power, and the Clyde, of fourteen horse power, were placed upon the river Clyde. Thus Scotland has had the honour of leading the way in this great line of improvement. In 1820 there were but three steam-vessels built and registered in England, four in Scotland, and one in Ireland. In 1826 there were fifty in England, and twenty-two in Scotland, with 9,000 tons burden. The building of steamers proceeded regularly, with an increasing amount of tonnage, till the number rose in 1849 to 1,296 steam-vessels, the aggregate burden of which was 177,310 tons. They were distributed as follows:—In the ports of England, 865 vessels, 103,154 tons; Scotland, 166 vessels, 29,206 tons; Ireland, 111 vessels, 26,369 tons; the Channel Islands, 7 vessels, 955 tons; the colonies, 147 vessels, 17,626 tons.

The social advantages of steam navigation can scarcely be exaggerated. Its effect on commerce is not more wonderful than upon society in promoting public health, and enlarging the sphere of enjoyment for the masses of the community. The English people, formerly so fond of home, so tied to the localities in which they lived, have been excited by the facility, and economy, and ease, and pleasure of steam navigation to move about from place to place, thus improving their knowledge and augmenting their happiness to a degree that if predicted half a century ago would have appeared an idle dream. The river Thames alone, covered with tiny steamers shooting along like swallows on the surface of the water, would have been a picture beyond the conception of a poet's fancy. The number of passengers conveyed between London and Gravesend by steam packets in 1835 was ascertained, by the collector of the pier dues at the latter town, to have been 670,452. It was stated in evidence before a committee of the house of commons in 1836, that 1,057,000 persons passed Blackwall in steam-vessels every year. It might have been thought that this newly-excited propensity to locomotion upon water would have diminished the demand for land conveyances and for horses; but the reverse has been the fact, as appears from the continually increasing number of licences for stage-coaches issued from the Stamp Office, and the enormous number of omnibuses plying in the metropolis and in the large provincial towns, especially in connection with railways, and this without displacing the hackney carriages or cabs, which have been multiplying likewise. It might be supposed that the opening of a railway in the same direction as a line of steam navigation, or *vice versa*, would seriously diminish the traffic one way or the other. On the contrary, it but increases it. For example, the number of passengers conveyed by the Hull and Selby steam-packets during the twelve months that preceded the opening of the Leeds and Selby railway was 33,882, whereas in the year which followed the opening, the number conveyed by the steamers increased to upwards of 62,000, or nearly doubled. Not only is steam communication kept up between all the principal ports of the United Kingdom, but it is also regularly maintained with all the neighbouring ports on the Continent, with those of France, Holland, Belgium, and other countries. Steam communication was established with the United States of America, with our West Indian Colonies, and with the

East Indies. A committee of the House of Commons was appointed in June, 1837, to inquire into the best means of establishing communication by steam with India by way of the Red Sea. It appeared in the course of that inquiry that the directors of the East India Company had sent orders to the governor general of India, to dispatch a steamship at stated periods from Bombay to Suez. In order still further to expedite the transmission of mails between England and India, a dromedary post was established between Bagdad and Damascus, and thence to Beyrout on the coast of the Mediterranean, to which port was extended the voyage of the steam-vessel that before stopped at Alexandria. In 1836 the governor of Bombay stated in a dispatch to the directors that the three last mails had brought dispatches respectively in 58, 45, and 64 days, stating that this "early intelligence" had given an energetic impulse to the mercantile interest, and had produced unbounded satisfaction, because, in addition to its commercial advantages, it had deprived the painful feeling of separation from home and country of half its bitterness. The dispatch concluded with an earnest prayer for the much desired boon of frequent and regular communication with Europe, by the employment of a sufficient number of steam-vessels for that purpose. During the year 1837, accordingly, arrangements were made for the establishment of a regular monthly steam communication between this country and India by way of the Red Sea upon the following basis:—"The government undertakes the transmission of the monthly mails between Great Britain and Alexandria at the sole charge of the public; and the East India Company undertakes the transmission of these mails between Alexandria and Bombay, upon condition that one-half of the expense incurred in the purchase and navigation of steam-vessels, and of any other expense incurred in the service, is defrayed by the government, which is to receive the whole money connected with postage of letters between London and Bombay." This arrangement was carried out, and a further economy of time was obtained by the overland route to Marseilles, instead of transmitting the mails by steam-packets from Falmouth through the Straits of Gibraltar. In this way the journey was shortened to the extent of more than 1,000 miles, the direct distance by Marseilles and Malta being 5,238 miles, and by way of Falmouth, 6,310 miles. This system of conveyance was maintained till 1841, when the government entered into a contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, which undertook to employ powerful steam-vessels for the carrying of letters and passengers between England and Egypt, and between Suez, Ceylon, Madras, and Calcutta, towards the expenses of which the East India Company undertook to contribute £20,000 per annum for five years. After some time there was a further extension of the plan, by which the government engaged to contribute £50,000 per annum towards the expense of the line of steam-packets between Bombay and Suez, £115,000 per annum for the service between Calcutta and Suez, and £45,000 for the service between Ceylon and Hong Kong, making a total of £210,000 per annum, of which one-third was to be repaid by the East India Company. By these arrangements we obtained a regular and safe steam communication twice a month to



THE LINCOLNSHIRE FENS, BETWEEN GAINSBOROUGH AND LINCOLN.

India, and once a month to China, at a cost which, though large in amount, cannot be considered extravagant when we consider the magnitude of the advantages secured by it, both political and mercantile, not only to our Oriental empire, but to the United Kingdom. We may judge of the extent of the intercourse thus carried on by the fact that in 1836 we received from Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and Ceylon about 180,000 letters, and that we sent to those places in the same year nearly 112,000 letters. There has been a steady increase ever since in both letters and newspapers. In 1843 we sent out 370,000 letters, and 429,000 newspapers. In 1845 we sent 448,335 letters, and 686,561 newspapers. The number of both letters and newspapers, inwards and outwards, in 1845, was 1,795,028.

Our coasting trade carried on by means of steamers has undergone an astounding development during the twenty years now under review. In 1820 we had but nine steamers engaged in it, with a tonnage of 500. The next year we had 188 steamers, and thenceforth they went on doubling for several years. In 1830 the number of vessels was nearly 7,000, with a tonnage of more than a million; in 1840 it was upwards of 15,000, with a tonnage of nearly three millions; and in 1849 it was 18,343, with a tonnage of upwards of four millions and a quarter. This account does not include vessels arriving and departing in ballast or with passengers only, which are not required to enter the Custom House. Steam-vessels were not employed in this kingdom for conveying goods coastwise before 1820, nor in foreign trade, except for the conveyance of passengers, earlier than 1822. In the foreign trade the number of steamers increased gradually from that year till they reached the number of 4,000, with an aggregate tonnage of 800,000.

Among the improvements of the age, none were more important than the works constructed for the purpose of facilitating communication between England and Ireland. We have seen, in our account of the visit of George IV. to Dublin, how difficult, how tedious, uncertain, and perilous was that communication, even so late as 1821; though the people of that time no doubt congratulated themselves that their facilities for travelling were so much greater than those of their ancestors. There certainly had been much gained in point of economy. In Roberts's "Social History of the Southern Counties," there is an account of a journey to Dublin performed in June, 1787, in a coach and four, accompanied by a post-chaise and pair and five outriders. The party reached Holyhead from London in four days, at a cost of £75 11s. 3d. The ferry at Bangor cost £1 10s.; the expenses of the yacht hired to carry the party across the Channel, £28 7s. 9d.; the duty on the coach, £7 13s. 4d.; boats on shore, £1 1s. Total, £114 3s. 4d. These expenses were much greater than the figures indicate, owing to the much higher value of money in those times. In order to avoid tossing perhaps for several days in the Irish Channel, parties proceeded to Holyhead, whence the passage by sea was considerably shorter. When the traveller from Dublin arrived at Holyhead, he was landed upon the bare, bleak rocks, without any shelter or protection, or conveniences of any kind. "From Holyhead across the island of Anglesea there was no road, but only a miserable track, circuitous and craggy, full of terrible

jolts, round bogs and over rocks, for a distance of twenty-four miles. Having reached the Menai Strait, the passengers had again to take an open ferry-boat before they could gain the mainland. The tide ran with great rapidity through the Strait, and when the wind blew strong, the boat was liable to be driven far up or down the Channel, and was sometimes swamped altogether. The perils of the Welsh roads had next to be encountered; through North Wales they were rough, narrow, steep, and unprotected, mostly unfenced, and in winter almost impassable. The whole traffic on the road between Shrewsbury and Bangor was conveyed by a small cart, which passed between the two places once a week in summer. As an illustration of the state of the roads in South Wales, which were quite as bad as those in the north, we may state that, in 1803, when the late lord Sudeley took home his bride from the neighbourhood of Welshpool to his residence, only thirteen miles distant, the carriage in which the newly-married pair rode stuck in a quagmire, and the occupants having extricated themselves from their perilous situation, performed the rest of their journey on foot." * Early in the century remedies for this state of things were slowly applied; packet stations were established, with proper landing-places, at Holyhead and Howth, under the direction of Mr. Rennie. Mr. Telford's services were called into requisition for the purpose of constructing roads, all efforts of the postmaster-general, by prosecutions and otherwise, having failed to compel the local authorities to keep the roads in a passable state. Stage-coaches had been frequently overturned and broken down, and the Irish mail-coach took forty-one hours to go from London to Holyhead, the Irish mail arriving in Dublin on the third day. At length, owing to the exertions of Sir Henry Parnell, one of the Irish members, a board of parliamentary commissioners was appointed, of which he was chairman, and the new Shrewsbury and Holyhead road was constructed, the works extending over a period of about fifteen years. These works were conducted by Mr. Telford, who pursued the same system that he had adopted in the formation of the Carlisle and Glasgow road as regards metalling, cross-draining, and fence-walling; for the latter purpose using schist or slate-rubble work instead of sandstone. The new road passing along the slopes of rocky precipices and across inlets of the sea, it became necessary to build many bridges, to form many embankments, and cut away long stretches of rock, in order to secure an easy and commodious route. The select committee of the House of Commons, in 1819, expressed the strongest approbation of the manner in which this road was constructed, stating that the professional execution of the works upon it surpassed anything of the kind in these countries. "The science which has been displayed in giving the general line of the road a proper inclination through a country whose whole surface consists of a succession of rocks, bogs, ravines, rivers, and precipices, reflects the greatest credit upon the engineer who planned them; but perhaps a still greater degree of professional skill has been shown in the construction, or rather the building of the road itself. The great attention which

* Smiles's "Lives of the Engineers," vol. ii., p. 434.

Mr. Telford has bestowed to give the surface of the road one uniform and moderately convex shape, free from the smallest inequality throughout its whole breadth; the numerous land-drains, and, when necessary, shores and tunnels of substantial masonry with which all the water arising from springs or falling in rain is instantly carried off; the great care with which a sufficient foundation is established for the road, and the quality, solidity, and disposition of the materials that are put upon it, are quite new in the system of road-making in these countries." The road along the coast from Bangor by Conway, Abergelle, St. Asaph, and Holywell was also greatly improved. But there was still great difficulty in removing the impediments at the Conway and Menai Straits, which Mr. Telford had the honour of overcoming, as we have seen in a former part of this work. Scientific details of the construction of these stupendous works would be out of place here; but the following graphic description of the hoisting of the first great chain across the Menai Strait will be interesting to our readers. "About the middle of April, 1825," says Mr. Smiles, "Mr. Telford left London for Bangor, to superintend the operations. An immense assemblage collected to witness the sight, greater in number than any that had been collected in the same place since the men of Anglesea, in their war paint, rushing down to the beach, had shrieked defiance across the Straits at their Roman invaders on the Caernarvon shore. Numerous boats, arrayed in gay colours, glided along the waters, the day—the 26th of April—being bright, calm, and in every way propitious. At half-past two, about an hour before high water, the raft bearing the main chain was cast off from near Treberth mill, on the Caernarvon side. Towed by four boats, it began gradually to move from the shore, and with the assistance of the tide, which caught it at its farther end, it swung slowly and majestically round to its position between the main piers, where it was moored. One end of the chain was then bolted to that which hung down the face of the Caernarvon pier; whilst the other was attached to ropes connected with strong capstans fixed upon the Anglesea side, the ropes passing by means of blocks over the top of the pyramid of the Anglesea pier. The capstans for hauling in the ropes bearing the main chain were two in number, manned by about 150 labourers. When all was ready, the signal was given to 'Go along!' A band of fifers struck up a lively tune; the capstans were instantly in motion, and the men stepped round in a steady trot. All went well. The ropes gradually coiled in. As the strain increased, the pace slackened a little, but 'Heave away! now she comes!' was sung out. Round went the men, and steadily and safely rose the ponderous chain. The tide had by this time turned, and bearing upon the side of the raft, now getting freer of its load, the current floated it away from under the middle of the chain, still resting on it, and it swung easily off into the water. Until this moment a breathless silence pervaded the watching multitude, and nothing was heard amongst the working party on the Anglesea side but the steady tramp of the men at the capstans, the shrill music of the fife, and the occasional order to 'Hold on!' or 'Go along!' But no sooner was the raft seen floating away, and the great chain

safely swinging in the air, than a tremendous cheer burst forth from both sides of the Straits. The rest of the work was only a matter of time—the most anxious moment had passed. In an hour and thirty-five minutes after the commencement of the hoisting, the chain was raised to its proper curvature, and fastened to the land portion of it, which had been previously placed over the top of the Anglesea pyramid. Mr. Telford ascended to the point of fastening, and satisfied himself that a continuous and safe connection had been formed from the Caernarvon fastening on the rock to that on Anglesea. The announcement of the fact was followed by loud and prolonged cheering from the workmen, echoed by the spectators, and extending along the Straits on both sides, until it seemed to die away along the shores in the distance. Three foolhardy workmen, excited by the day's proceedings, had the temerity to scramble along the upper surface of the chain, which was only nine inches wide, and formed a curvature of 590 feet from one side of the Straits to the other! Far different were the feelings of the engineer who had planned this magnificent work. Its failure had been predicted; and, like Brindley's Barton viaduct, it had been freely spoken of as a 'castle in the air.' Telford had, it is true, most carefully tested every point by repeated experiment, and so conclusively proved the sufficiency of the iron chains to bear the immense weight they would have to support, that he was thoroughly convinced as to the soundness of his principles of construction, and satisfied that, if rightly manufactured and properly put together, the chains would hold together, and the piers would sustain them. Still there was necessarily an element of uncertainty in the undertaking. It was the largest structure of the kind that had ever been attempted. There was the contingency of a flaw in the iron; some possible scamping in its manufacture; some little point which, in the multiplicity of details to be attended to, he might have overlooked, or which his subordinates might have neglected. It was indeed impossible but that he should feel intensely anxious as to the result of the day's operations. Mr. Telford afterwards stated to a friend, only a few months before his death, that for some time previous to the opening of the bridge his anxiety was so extreme that he could scarcely sleep, and that a continuance of that condition must have very soon completely undermined his health. We are not therefore surprised to learn that when his friends rushed to congratulate him on the result of the first day's experiment, which decisively proved the strength and solidity of the bridge, they should have found the engineer upon his knees engaged in prayer. A vast load had been taken off his mind; the perilous enterprise of the day had been accomplished without loss of life, and his spontaneous act was thankfulness and gratitude."

The suspension of the remaining fifteen chains was accomplished without difficulty, the last being raised and fixed on the 9th of July, 1825, when a band played the National Anthem amidst the cheering of many thousand persons; whilst the workmen marched in procession along the bridge, and the St. David steam-packet passed under the chains towards the Senithy rocks and back again, thus re-opening the navigation. The bridge was opened for

public traffic on the 18th of January, 1826, when the London and Holyhead mail coach passed over it for the first time, followed by the commissioners of the Holyhead roads, the engineers, several stage-coaches, and a multitude of people. The length of the bridge is 1,710 feet—nearly the third of a mile—the distance between the points of suspension of the main bridge being 559 feet; the total weight of iron was 2,187 tons, in 33,265 pieces, and the total cost of the bridge and its approaches was £120,000. A similar suspension bridge was thrown over the estuary at Conway. The works commenced in April, 1822, and were completed in 1826.

Holyhead, formerly a small fishing village, has grown into a considerable town, in consequence of its being the nearest and most convenient place of embarkation for Ireland. Here terminate the great parliamentary roads from London and Chester. It is the terminus of the Chester and Holyhead Railway, in connection with which two mail packets start for Kingstown daily. Immense sums have been spent in constructing the pier, and in making Holyhead a harbour of refuge. The works inclose an area of 316 acres, and a depth of at least six and a half fathoms of water. The pier extends nearly 1,000 feet, and upon it is an arch of *Mona marble*, commemorative of the visit of George IV. in 1821. At the extremity of the pier is a lighthouse, exhibiting a white light fifty feet above sea level. On South Stack, an isolated rock, three miles west, is another lighthouse, whose light is produced by twenty-one lamps, with powerful reflectors, and is 212 feet above high water mark. The railway trains run down to the pier, so that passengers can step into the steamers at once, without the necessity of troubling themselves about luggage. At Kingstown, which is connected by a railway with Dublin, trains running every half-hour, and a special train running alongside the mail boats, the conveniences for the embarkation and landing of passengers are still greater. A commodious harbour is inclosed by two piers, extending about half a mile into the sea; and to crown the contrast between the past and the present, passengers may go through from Dublin to London in eleven hours, at a charge of £3 1s. for first class and saloon, and £2 4s. 6d. for second class and saloon. The City of Dublin Steam Packet Company has upon the line four splendid mail packets, which leave Kingstown every morning and evening, and perform the passage to Holyhead in three hours and forty-five minutes. Besides the mail boats, there is a large passenger traffic in other steamers from all the principal sea-ports of Ireland to England, while cattle and goods of all sorts are conveyed daily in steamers to Holyhead, Liverpool, Fleetwood, Bristol, and Glasgow, so that the Channel, instead of keeping up the separation between the two islands, serves more effectually to unite them by facility of intercourse and identity of interests.

The effect of steam communication between Great Britain and Ireland was to increase very greatly the traffic of those countries. It has been stated that in order to save the salaries of one or two junior clerks, it was determined to cease keeping any official records of this traffic, with the exception of grain and flour. In the absence of such records, we can only arrive at an approximation to

the quantity and value of the exports and imports. It was, however, estimated by persons acquainted with the subject, that the quantity of agricultural produce imported into Liverpool alone in 1832 was worth four millions and a half sterling; and this produce consisted chiefly of live stock—horses, sheep, and pigs—which could not have been so profitably brought over by sailing vessels. The value of agricultural produce brought to the port of Bristol from Ireland in the same year was one million sterling. The total value of all sorts of live animals brought from Ireland to Liverpool in 1837 was £3,397,760. One of the most curious items in the traffic is the egg trade. Formerly eggs were extremely cheap in Ireland, but in consequence of the rapid conveyance by steam-boats, they are bought up by agents of the egg merchants, who intercept the baskets on the roads leading to sea-ports; and the consequence is that in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Belfast, Londonderry, and Sligo they have become extremely dear, and new-laid eggs are often a costly luxury. In the course of the year 1832 no less than £100,000 was paid for Irish eggs in Liverpool and Bristol alone. Were it possible to ascertain the amount paid by the English and Scotch for this article of consumption, it would be scarcely credible. Looking at the whole traffic between the two islands, we perceive that the amount of tonnage employed in 1849 was 250 per cent. more than it was in 1801. Up to 1826 the increase was not so rapid as subsequently, it being then only 62 per cent. on the whole period, showing an annual increase of $2\frac{2}{3}$ per cent., whereas for the quarter of a century that followed, the increase was 188 per cent., the annual increase being 8 per cent.

Trade and commerce were very much hampered by the old system of weights and measures, or rather the want of system which prevailed before 1824, when the gallon varied in size with the nature of the things that it measured, and the utmost irregularity and discrepancy prevailed with regard to all weights and measures in different parts of the United Kingdom. But in 1824 an act was passed for ascertaining and establishing uniformity of weights and measures, by which the old standards of weight and linear measure that had been long in use in England were adopted, and made applicable to the whole kingdom, while the measures of capacity were changed and rendered uniform. A curious mode of verifying measure and weight, and establishing their mutual relations, is thus described:—"The contents of the cube of the sixth part of the length of the pendulum vibrating seconds in the latitude of London, at the level of the sea, and in a vacuum (which has been the element for establishing linear measure), is so very near the contents of the imperial standard gallon, that the difference is only three-tenths of a cubic inch; the cube of the sixth part of the length of the pendulum being 277·578, while the imperial gallon contains 277·274 cubic inches; and the tenth part of the weight of an imperial gallon of water, at a temperature exactly one-sixth part of the distance between the points of freezing and boiling, is an imperial standard avoirdupois pound. The standards of both weights and measures are thus rendered so far invariable in future, that they are found to be independent of all artificial measurements and graduations, and can be at once referred to nature alone for their prototypes. This is

assuredly a great improvement over the old system, which made a grain of corn, the human foot, and the distance to which a man can extend his arms—all things which are manifestly liable to considerable diversity—the elements whence to determine weight and measure."

CHAPTER XXXV.

National Progress (*continued*)—Foreign Commerce—Necessity of Free Trade—Exports and Imports—Our Commerce with Africa—The Slave Trade—Our Commerce with India—Monopoly of the East India Company—The Coffee Trade—London Coffee-houses—China; the Tea Trade—Tea Duties—Currency—Coin—Inadequacy of a Metallic Currency—Paper Money—The Bank of England—Joint Stock Banks—The Public Revenue—The National Debt—Terminable Annuities—National Income and Expenditure—Cost of the National Defences—The Sinking Fund—Progress of the National Debt—Stocks—Paying Power of the English Nation—Its Sources—Work—Increase of Houses—Number and Cost of Domestic Servants—Carriages—Horses—Consumption of Candles—Property Insured against Fire—Life Insurance—Legacy and Probate Duties—Investments in House Property—The Value of Real Property rated for Income Tax—Savings Banks.

No matter how active, skilful, and persevering the people of these islands might be, they could not exist in such numbers without foreign commerce. The vast hives of national industry, unless the bees went abroad and collected their stores throughout the nations of Europe, each bringing home his share and contributing his part to the general sum of wealth and enjoyment, would soon exhaust the means of subsistence. No country has such advantages for foreign commerce as England, and it must be confessed that those advantages have been turned to account with great success, notwithstanding the restrictive laws with which our trade was trammelled for so long a period. With a limited extent of soil to be cultivated, we must always be dependent upon foreign countries for a large portion of the articles we consume, and especially for bread, the staff of life. The permanent supply of our wants must therefore be secured by the extension of our commercial relations with countries whose interest it shall be to supply us with the productions that we need, and to take from us the productions that we have to sell. We therefore have at length arrived at the conclusion upon which the national mind rests as upon a solid, immovable basis, that free trade is our true policy; that, in fact, it is essential to our national well-being; and that no man of sound sense can ever more think of returning to the same system of protection which everybody now sees to be a device for giving high prices to a class of home-producers, by enhancing the cost of living to the great mass of the community, intercepting the bounty of Providence, and artificially limiting the supply of the necessities of life.

In 1820 our imports of foreign and colonial merchandise were valued at £32,000,000; our exports of foreign and colonial merchandise at £10,000,000; and our exports of British and Irish produce and manufactures at £38,000,000. In 1840 these sums had respectively increased to £67,000,000, £13,000,000, and £102,000,000, setting aside odd numbers. From 1831 to 1840 the average annual exports of British produce and manufactures was £45,000,000, while in the nine subsequent years it was near £56,000,000. From 1830 onwards the value of our exports to France increased six-fold, notwithstanding the

jealous system of protection that prevails in that country. The sphere of our commercial operations was being continually enlarged from year to year, and the enterprise of our merchants was continually opening up fresh markets in distant parts of the world. The value of the exports of British and Irish produce in 1820 was as follows:—To Northern Europe, £11,000,000; to Southern Europe, £7,000,000; to Africa, £393,000; to Asia, nearly £4,000,000; to the United States of America, nearly £4,000,000; to the British North American Colonies and the West Indies, £5,750,000; to Central and South America, including Brazil, £3,000,000. The total value of our exports to foreign countries, and to our colonies in that year, was £36,000,000. In 1840 we exported the following quantities, which, it will be seen, show a large increase:—To Northern Europe, about £12,000,000; to Southern Europe, £9,000,000; to Africa, £1,500,000; to Asia, £9,000,000; to the United States, £5,250,000; to the British North American Colonies, £6,500,000; to the foreign West Indies, £1,000,000; to Central and Southern America, including Brazil, £6,000,000; total, £51,000,000: showing an increase of £15,000,000 in the annual value of our exports to foreign countries during twenty years.

The reader cannot fail to be struck with the small amount of our exports to Africa. During the five years ending 1844, it did not reach £5,000,000, the half of which went to the British settlements on the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Cape Coast Castle, and Accra. In a district embracing, between the Gambia and Angola, nearly 4,000 miles of coast, and containing at least 30,000,000 of inhabitants, the quantity of British manufactures consumed was not more than £200,000 per annum. The African population is no doubt in a semi-barbarous state, but this is inevitable, from the utter insecurity of life and property arising chiefly from the slave trade. The land lies waste because those who would be disposed to cultivate it could never count upon reaping what they sowed. They could not even venture abroad into the fields without being liable to be captured, carried off, and sold as slaves. The natives are willing enough to trade with us, and the resources of large tracts of the country are of the richest description. But our merchant vessels had no chance in competing with the slave traders, for when one of the latter appeared off the coast, all industrial occupations were stopped, and bands of marauders went into the country to seize all the members of neighbouring tribes they could lay hold upon, in order to sell them. Were law and order established, were life and property protected, Africa would furnish a boundless field for commerce, and we should be able to see realised in our day the almost fabulous productiveness of ancient times, when Africa possessed regular and powerful governments. Mr. Layard has said, "The Delta of the Niger alone, if cleared and cultivated, would support a population in proportion to its area far exceeding anything known in Europe. Its square surface is equal to the whole of Ireland; it is intersected in all directions by navigable branches of the parent stream, forming so many natural channels for communication; it is altogether composed of the richest alluvial soil, which now teems with a rank, luxuriant vegetation, comprising all the varieties of

the palm-tree, besides teak-wood, cedar, ebony, mahogany, and dye-woods. The sugar-cane grows wild in the bush, and the palm-nut rots upon the ground, unheeded and neglected. The population of this Delta, I should consider, does not exceed half a million." Yet our commerce with this rich district, so happily formed by nature for a great commercial emporium, does not exceed, as Mr. Porter remarks, the value of the eggs sent from Ireland to the single port of Liverpool. The cultivation of cotton is specially adapted not only to the soil and climate, but to the nature and habits of the negro population. So that England has the greatest possible interest in the extension of Christian civilisation and good government in Africa.

Our commerce with India increased during the half century terminating at the commencement of the present reign to the extent of nearly 200 per cent., while the opening of the trade with China gave a great impulse to our important commerce with that part of the world. The East India Company's charter expired in 1834, and then, for the first time, a distinction was made between the exports to India and China. The declared value of English manufactures exported to China in 1834 was £800,000; in 1836 it was £1,250,000. In several subsequent years it was much lower than this, but it reached about double that amount in 1844 and 1845. The monopoly of the East India Company always crippled our trade with the East, and it is only now, when freedom and good government are so rapidly developing the resources of the country, and creating a prosperity never known in that part of the world before, that we can fully conceive the paralysing power of the incubus that rested so long upon our Indian empire. A discriminating duty of 28s. per cwt., or 50 per cent., was imposed upon coffee grown in British India, for the benefit of the West Indian planters. The effect of the reduction in 1825 was to increase the consumption of coffee, in six years, from 8,000,000lb. to 22,000,000lb. "The price of fine Jamaica coffee, which at the time the duty was reduced was about 90s. per cwt., advanced, through the demands of the consumers, to 125s. per cwt., but without producing any increased production. The quantity annually imported of British plantation coffee, in the five years that preceded the reduction of the duty in 1825, averaged 30,280,360lb.; and the average quantity imported in the five years from 1832 to 1836, reached only 19,812,160lb., being a reduction of 34 per cent. in the supply, notwithstanding the inability of the West India planters to keep pace with the wants of the English consumers. In September, 1835, our tariff was so far modified, that coffee imported from the British possessions in India, if accompanied by a certificate of its being the actual produce of those possessions, was admitted to consumption on payment of the same rate of duty as British plantation coffee. The quantity of East India coffee taken for consumption while the duty remained at 9d. per lb. advanced, because of the increasing price of West India coffee, from about 800,000lb. per annum to about 1,500,000lb. The assimilation of the rates of duty did not take effect until two-thirds of 1835 had elapsed; but in that year the consumption of East India coffee advanced to 5,596,791lb., and in 1837 reached 9,114,793lb."

In 1824 the consumption of coffee in the United Kingdom was 8,250,000lb., and the duties were—on foreign coffee, 2s. 6d. per lb.; East India, 1s. 6d.; British West India, 1s. per lb. In the same year the consumption was—of foreign coffee, 1,540lb.; East India, 313,000lb.; West India, about 800,000lb. In the following year, Mr. Huskisson reduced the duties on these several kinds to 1s. 3d., 9d., and 6d., respectively, which caused a rapid increase in the consumption. In 1840 the consumption was—of East and West India, 14,500,000lb.; and of foreign, 14,000,000lb. In 1821, 7,250,000lb. of coffee were consumed by fourteen millions of people in Great Britain. In 1841, 27,250,000lb. were consumed by eighteen and a half millions of people. In the former year the duty per lb. on British plantation coffee was 1s., and the sum contributed per head to the revenue was 6d.; in the latter year the duty was 6l., and the sum contributed per head to the revenue was 10½d.—a striking illustration of the bad policy of high duties, looking only to the revenue even, without reference to the privations which they inflict upon the people. In 1835 the duty on coffee consumed in the United Kingdom was £652,000. Chicory has also become an important article of commerce in this country. In 1840 the quantity of raw chicory retained for home consumption was nearly 4,000cwt., its value being 9s. 6d. per cwt., and the duty 20s. per cwt. In the early part of the present century there was scarcely a coffee-house in London to which the humbler classes could resort, or where a cup of this exhilarating beverage could be had for less than 6d. In 1844 the number of coffee-houses in London was above 600, in some of which from 700 to 800 persons a day were supplied, at the rate of 1d. per cup, and in others from 1,500 to 1,600 persons were served at 1½d. a cup. All these houses were well supplied with daily and weekly newspapers, and with magazines and other publications, for the use of those who frequented them; so that for two or three pence a working man might get his cup of coffee, a roll of bread, and the reading of the public journals, being thus put upon a level in point of facilities for obtaining information with regard to current history with the wealthiest men in the land.

The tea trade with China was used by the East India Company for the purpose of enriching itself, by an enormous tax upon the British consumer. During one hundred years it ranged from 2s. to 4s. in the pound excise duty, with a customs duty of 14 per cent., down to a total minimum duty of 12½ per cent. The former duty was estimated at 200 per cent. on the value of the common teas. The effect, as might be expected, was an enormous amount of smuggling. The monopoly of the company was abolished; it was made lawful for any person to import tea by 4 William IV., cap. 85; and the trade was opened on the 22nd of April, 1834. The *ad valorem* duties were abolished, and all the bohea tea imported for home consumption was charged with a customs duty of 1s. 6d. per lb.; congou, and other teas of superior quality, were charged 2s. 2d. per lb., and some 3s. per lb. In 1836 these various duties gave place to a uniform one of 2s. 1d. per lb., which, with the addition of 5 per cent., imposed

in 1840, continued till 1851, when the penny was removed. In 1853 the duty was lightened, with a view to its permanent reduction to 1s. in the pound in 1856. The Russian war interfered with this plan, and caused a rise from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d. In 1857 this war duty was again reduced to 1s. 5d., at which it remained till the present year (1863), when the 5d. has been struck off, and the duty is now 1s. in the pound. During the last year of restricted trade (1833), our aggregate importations amounted to 32,000,000 lbs.; during the first year of free trade, they bounded up to 44,000,000 lbs.; and in 1856 they had attained 86,000,000 lbs. The average price of tea

that empire is about £12,000,000. This is but a small amount compared with what it will be when freedom of intercourse is completely established, in pursuance of the treaty of Tien-tsin. It is a strange anomaly that, with all this busy traffic, the Chinese have no coinage, except the copper *tchen*, or *cash*, which is not a tenth of a penny; and all but the most trifling payments are made either in foreign money or by the weight of silver.

The vast commercial transactions daily and hourly carried on by the people of the United Kingdom require a circulating medium adapted to their magnitude, and capable of expanding according to the requirements of



MR. RAIKES.

per lb., including duty, in 1834, was 4s. 4d. In 1821 the total quantity of tea imported into Great Britain was upwards of 31,000,000 lbs., and its value £1,873,886; in 1834 the quantity was about 35,000,000 lbs., and the value about £2,000,000. The change of habits among the British people with regard to diet may be inferred from the increased consumption of tea during a century. In 1760, 7,000,000 people consumed 3,861,000 lbs. of tea; in 1859, 28,900,000 people consumed 76,300,000 lbs. of tea. Of all the nations of the East, the Chinese are the most addicted to traffic. The Middle Kingdom has been described as, throughout its length and breadth, a perpetual fair. The annual value of our direct trade with

society. We can scarcely conceive it possible that business could be conducted among us on the Chinese plan of weighing the precious metals in paying for goods, or in bartering one commodity for another. Still less could we suppose it possible to conduct the commerce of the country according to the primitive methods of nations in the earlier stages of civilisation, who endeavoured to establish a rude standard of value by the number of the skins of wild animals, or the number of cattle. *Pecunia* is derived from *pecus*, which seems to prove that cattle had been the primitive money of the Romans, as they undoubtedly were that of the ancient Germans, whose laws uniformly fixed the amount of the penalties to be paid for offences in

cattle. Corn was also used to represent money in ancient nations. Salt is said to be used in Abyssinia as the standard, and dried fish in Iceland. Pieces of leather, shells, nails, and various other things, have been agreed upon as representatives of value and mediums of exchange, by which, in the early stages of society, men might get for goods they did not want something that would enable them to purchase goods they did want. For example, the shoemaker wants bread for the support of his family, and is ready to give shoes in exchange, but the baker does not want shoes; therefore the shoemaker must obtain for his goods something which the baker does want, and this something must be available to purchase anything that he may require for conducting his business or supporting his family. The need of a medium to supersede the necessity of barter, which would never do in a civilised state of society, with innumerable artificial wants and complicated relations, was universally felt; therefore there must be a medium of exchange, a circulating standard of value, which has been called currency. The materials selected for this purpose must be intrinsically valuable, durable, portable. These purposes are best answered by gold, silver, and copper, which all civilised nations have agreed to cut up in bits, and stamp with a certain value, being of known weight and fineness of quality. In order to secure these objects, the state has taken upon itself the duty of assaying, shaping, and stamping the metal, and issuing it from the Mint. Coining of money by private parties is treated as a crime against the sovereign, to whom the coin of the realm technically belongs. Formerly, this mode of robbing society was punished with death; now the penalty is mitigated, and therefore more certainly inflicted.

There has been a great deal of mystery connected with the subject of money and currency, and serious mistakes about the purpose which a currency is to serve. This is simply to supply cash enough for carrying on the business of society. Any amount of coined money beyond the necessary reserve to meet the public demand in this respect is waste. The *rationale* of a currency has been briefly and very clearly expressed by a recent writer, who says:—"All the fundamental laws of currency have now been established by the examination of a purely metallic currency. We have seen, first, that one commodity is selected to supersede barter in effecting exchanges, and to measure the value of all other commodities. Secondly, that this commodity possesses an intrinsic value of its own, determined in the same manner as the value of all other commodities, and subject to the same general laws with them. Thirdly, that there exists in society a certain demand for the use of this commodity, a certain work to be performed by it as an instrument of exchange; and that the quantity of this currency in circulation, as of any other commodity, may be deficient, full, or in excess, compared with this work or demand. Fourthly, that when the currency is full, every addition made to it by importation of the metal of which it is composed, finds no demand for its use, and must go into store, useless and inoperative, among other articles with which the market may be glutted; and that the only use to which this surplus can be put is to export

it abroad for the purchase of commodities which can pass into actual consumption. It has been thus shown that a so-called drain of gold is a beneficial operation, and a retention of the gold a pure and uncompensated waste. Fifthly, that whilst a real commodity in the form of coin is the sole measure of value, promises or pledges to pay that coin, by the side of and supplementing coin, perform the full work of currency as instruments of exchange; and that the amount of coin practically required in any country depends, in a very great measure, on the extent and efficiency of the subsidiary currency—on the use, that is, of bills, cheques, book-credits, and the like."*

The condition of the country in regard to the coined money in circulation during the early years of the present century was exceedingly unsatisfactory. The shillings and sixpences, tenpences and fivpences, that passed from hand to hand by common consent, were almost all of them blank pieces of silver, intrinsically worth less than half the sums at which they were current. Guineas, half-guineas, and gold pieces of the value of seven shillings were occasionally seen; but the rapid advance in the market price of gold withdrew them from circulation. There were also Spanish dollars, stamped with a diminutive impress of the king's head, at the rate of 4s. 6d. each. Then the Bank of England was authorised to issue tokens value 1s. 6d., 3s., and 5s. There was not any silver coinage by the state until 1816, except small coins to be distributed in alms by the king. Between 1806 and 1810 grants amounting to £162,000 were made by parliament for the erection of the present Mint, which was completed in 1813. The new constitution of the Mint was founded on the report of the Honourable Wellesley Pole, who held the office of master of the Mint, in which he was succeeded by some of our most distinguished statesmen—namely, Mr. George Tierney, Mr. J. C. Herries, Lord Auckland, Mr. J. Abercrombie, Mr. A. Baring, Mr. Henry Labouchere, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Sir George Clarke, and Mr. R. L. Sheil. From a return made by the Company of Moneyers to a committee of the House of Commons, in the year 1837, it appears that the amount of gold coined from 1558 to 1830 was £154,000,000; and of silver, £39,000,000. In 1817 the gold coinage amounted to £4,500,000, and the silver to about £4,500,000. From 1816 till 1853 the total coinage at the royal Mint was—gold, £121,000,000, and silver nearly £15,000,000. In the last year mentioned the quantity of gold coined was nearly £12,000,000.

It soon became evident that a metallic currency, though the best that could be adopted as a standard, was wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of the commercial world and of daily life. It was therefore necessary to have recourse to bills of exchange and paper money. Hence the establishment of banks, and the issue of bank notes, which are not, like bills of exchange, mere securities or documents for debts, but, as Lord Mansfield says, "are treated as *money* in the ordinary course and transactions of business by the general consent of mankind; and on payment of them whenever a receipt is required, the receipts are always given as for money, not as for securities or

notes. But unless the issue of such notes be very carefully regulated, and security be taken that there shall be the capability of redeeming them with the precious metals, they may be found to be quite worthless, as they have been to the cost of multitudes, when joint stock banks have broken down. To guard against this danger, while at the same time having a sufficient paper currency for the purposes of commerce, has been the object of legislation in this country, and the best means of effecting this object has been the constant subject of keen discussion among writers on currency and banking. Several of these, namely, Mr. D. Ricardo, Mr. Clay, Colonel Torrens, and Mr. S. Ricardo, have advocated the establishment of a national bank "under the management of competent functionaries, qualified by the possession, not of Bank stock, but of economical science; appointed, not by the holders of Bank stock, but by the government; responsible, not to their co-proprietors, but to parliament; and having for their first object and primary duty the protection, not of their own corporate property, but of the general interests of the nation." The want of such a body as this seemed to arise from the failure of the Bank of England to regulate its issues and its rates of discount in such a manner as to prevent over-trading and panics, and from the ineffectual character of the cheques upon private banks of issue in the provinces. These matters have been already treated in the course of this history; but, as indicative of national progress, we may advert now to the amount of paper money in circulation at different epochs during the period under review. The value of the coin and bullion in the Bank of England in the last weeks of February, May, August, and November, 1825, respectively, was £2,300,000, £4,300,000, £6,600,000, and £8,900,000; and in February following it amounted to £10,000,000. The notes of the Bank in circulation in the same weeks amounted to £24,900,000, £21,900,000, £21,300,000, and £19,900,000.

About this time provision was made by parliament for the establishment of joint stock banks of issue, but they were not permitted to carry on their business nearer to London than sixty-five miles. In 1834 the Bank of England notes in circulation amounted in round numbers to £18,000,000, the country bank-notes in circulation to £10,000,000, and the amount of bullion held by the Bank of England was £10,000,000. In 1837 the Bank of England issued £17,000,000, and had £4,000,000 of bullion; while the joint stock banks issued £12,000,000. The Bank of England was authorised to issue £14,000,000 beyond the value of bullion in its coffers. This was made up of £11,000,000, the amount of its capital, which was lent permanently to government at 3 per cent. interest, and £3,000,000 of public securities, bearing interest, which the bank of issue was empowered to hold for that purpose. "Under this system the Bank must be always provided with the means of discharging on demand all its notes in excess of £14,000,000, for which remaining sum the public holds, in the hands of the government, the best possible security, that of the property of the Bank. No question as to the solvency of the establishment can therefore ever arise, while it is hardly possible

to conceive that a drain upon the treasure of the Bank should ever be carried so far as to reduce its outstanding notes to so low a level as £14,000,000." * With regard to the issues of private and joint stock banks, it was provided by the act of 1844, which renewed for ten years the charter of the Bank of England, that "no person other than a banker who on the 6th of May, 1844, was lawfully issuing his own notes, shall make or issue bank-notes in any part of the United Kingdom." The privilege of such issue was continued to them, but the amount in each case was restricted to what constituted their actual issues, upon the average, of the two preceding years, while security was provided that the amount should not be exceeded, by requiring a weekly publication of the issues in the *Gazette*.

The best financial system is one which imposes taxes only for the purposes of revenue, and in such a manner as to press least heavily upon the springs of industry, and to create the fewest possible impediments to social progress; while the revenue should be only what is necessary for carrying on the government of the country, maintaining its dignity, and protecting it from invasion. In this way the national resources are most freely developed, at the same time that the public wealth is rapidly increased, and a vast fund is accumulated, on which the chancellor of the exchequer can draw whenever danger threatens, or a war becomes inevitable. Our financial system is far from being perfect, but we have got upon the right path, and our legislature is by degrees unlearning the errors of the past, and making better provision for the future, though it has still much to learn in the way of economy. In 1820 the amount of revenue paid into the exchequer as the produce of taxation was £54,000,000. The interest upon the National Debt was £31,000,000, and the sums applied to the redemption of public debt was about £2,000,000. At the same time the current annual expenditure was £21,000,000. The revenue increased to £59,000,000 in 1824, after which it declined to £50,000,000 in 1830, when the annual expenditure was reduced to £18,000,000. In 1840 the revenue was £47,000,000, and the interest on the public debt £29,000,000; the total amount paid and expended being £49,000,000.

The state of the unredeemed public debt on the 5th of January, 1816, was £816,311,939 of capital, and £30,458,204 of annual charge. The surplus revenue that has been applied to the redemption of the National Debt between that date and January, 1849, amounted to £45,779,000; and the amount of terminable annuities was increased from £1,888,835 to £3,755,000. The tables first adopted for the creation of terminable annuities in 1808 were incorrect, and entailed a loss of £10,000 upon the public, besides leaving the annual sum of £23,000 to pay for an indefinite time. Mr. Finlayson estimated the loss to the public through miscalculation in 1827 as proceeding at the rate of £8,000 per week, and that during the three previous months it had exceeded £95,000. "It is quite impossible," says Mr. Porter, "that any similar series of blunders could have been committed by any private persons, or association of individuals, whose vigilance would have

been sufficiently preserved by their private interest; and it is disgraceful that the government, which could have at all times commanded the assistance of the most accomplished actuaries, should have fallen into them. It is yet more disgraceful, that after the evil had been discovered, and pressed upon its notice, so many years were suffered to elapse before any step was taken to put a stop to the waste of the public money.* In the fourth report of the select committee on "Public Income and Expenditure," printed by order of the House of Commons in 1828, we have statements of the public income and expenditure for three periods, and similar statements have been given down to the year 1850, from which it appears that the expenditure for ten years ending January, 1802, was nearly £448,000,000, the income being less than £259,000,000; so that the amount of expenditure more than income was about £190,000,000—a formidable accumulation of debt in the course of ten years. During that period the sum of £381,000,000 was raised by the creation of debt. But these were small sums compared with the accounts of the fourteen years ending the 5th of January, 1816. The expenditure during those fourteen years reached the almost fabulous amount of one billion and nearly sixty millions sterling; the income during the same time being something over £800,000,000. The amount raised by the creation of debt during the period was £900,000,000, and the expenditure exceeded the income by £236,000,000. Again, in the period of twelve years, which ended on the 5th of January, 1828, the income was £670,000,000, and the expenditure £640,000,000. During that period we raised by the creation of debt £540,000,000; the income having exceeded the expenditure by £29,000,000. Lastly, during the twenty-two years that ended January 5th, 1850, the income amounted to one billion and ninety-two thousand sterling, and the expenditure to one billion and seventy-five thousand sterling; the income exceeding the expenditure by £16,000,000. It appears from these statements that during the thirty-five years of peace between 1816 and 1850, the excess of income over expenditure had been £45,779,000. "At this rate," says Mr. Porter, "it would require 316 years of peace to cancel the debt incurred during twenty-four years of war, or thirteen years for one. But the comparison is even more unfavourable than this, because at the time of borrowing the rate of interest was high, and the value of public securities low; whereas, at the time of liquidation the reverse of these circumstances is experienced; so that, on the most favourable supposition, it requires fifteen years of saving in peace to repair the evil consequences of one year of war expenditure; at which rate our successors who may be living about the close of the twenty-second century might, if during all that time the nation should remain at peace, find themselves relieved from that portion of the public debt which was contracted since 1792. On the other hand, this period would be somewhat hastened by the extinction of that part of our public debt which consists of terminable and life annuities."

The national defences during the first half of the present

century cost the country more than £1,200,000,000, of which 52½ per cent. was spent during the fourteen years of war, and the remaining 47½ per cent. during thirty-five years of peace. During the whole period of forty-nine years, the army cost £628,000,000; the navy, £458,000,000; the ordnance, £119,000,000. During the last ten years of the war we advanced, in loans and subsidies to foreign powers, more than £30,000,000. Since 1817 a deduction has been made of about £90,000,000 from the principal of the National Debt, and about £6,500,000 from the interest on its account. This reduction has been effected chiefly by taking advantage of the fall in the rate of interest since the peace, and offering to pay off the holders of the different stocks, unless they consented to accept of a reduced payment; and had it not been for the practice of funding large capitals at a low rate of interest, the saving in this way would have been far greater.

A "sinking fund," for the extinction of public debt, was established by Sir Robert Walpole in 1716, but used up in 1733. Having done little in time of peace, and nothing in time of war, towards the discharge of the National Debt, the purpose of its inviolable application was abandoned, and the hopes entertained of its efficacy entirely disappointed. A new sinking fund was established by Mr. Pitt, in 1786, to be formed by the appropriation to it of £1,000,000 per annum, which was to be allowed to accumulate at compound interest by the addition of the dividends on the stock which it purchased, till it amounted to £4,000,000, after which the dividends arising from the stock purchased were to be applied to the diminution of taxes, or any other object that parliament might direct. Further additions were made to the fund; and in 1792 a sinking fund of a new character was constituted, by which it was proposed that, besides a provision for the interests of each loan which should be contracted, taxes should also be imposed for a one per cent. sinking fund on the capital stock created by it, which should be exclusively employed in the liquidation of that particular loan—a result which, it was hoped, would be accomplished, under the most unfavourable circumstances, in forty-five years. Lord Macaulay speaks very contemptuously of Mr. Pitt's scheme of a sinking fund. "Very idle apprehensions," he says, "were generally entertained that the public debt, though much less than a third of the debt which we now bear with ease, would be found too heavy for the strength of the nation. Those apprehensions might not, perhaps, have been easily quieted by reason, but Pitt quieted them by a juggle. He succeeded in persuading first himself and then the whole nation—his opponents included—that a new sinking fund, which, so far as it differed from former sinking funds, differed for the worse, would, by virtue of some mysterious power of propagation belonging to money, put into the pocket of the public creditor great sums not taken out of the pocket of the taxpayer. The country, terrified by a danger which was no danger, hailed with delight and boundless confidence a remedy which was no remedy. The minister was almost universally extolled as the greatest of financiers." Lord Henry Petty made an attempt, in 1807, to render the sinking fund more effective for its purpose—a very complicated

* "Progress of the Nation," p. 430.

system, which, according to Dr. Hamilton, an able writer on the subject, only tended to mislead and perplex the public mind. He showed that the whole amount of taxes that would have been paid in twenty years for the annual loan of £11,000,000 on the old plan of a sinking fund of one per cent., would be £154,000,000. On Lord Henry Petty's plan these taxes would in the same time have been £93,000,000—a difference in favour of the latter of £61,000,000; but to obtain this exemption, we should have been encumbered with an additional debt of £119,000,000 capital. In 1813, Mr. Vansittart made another alteration in the sinking fund, in connection with which Mr. Huskisson said that the very foundation of the assumption that the old debt has been paid off, is laid in the circumstance of our having incurred a new debt of much larger amount; the sinking fund having been originally established “to prevent the inconvenient and dangerous accumulation of debt hereafter.” This fund, in fact, instead of diminishing the debt, tended to increase it, because it was formed by borrowing, because it encouraged expenditure, and because it was repeatedly invaded whenever there was an emergency. In the year 1825, £5,000,000 were appropriated to a sinking fund, which was afterwards reduced to £3,000,000. In the year 1828 a committee was appointed, which, says Mr. J. L. Ricardo, “after full consideration, came to the only reasonable conclusion, that the true principle upon which to calculate the amount applicable as a sinking fund for the redemption of the debt was the excess of revenue over expenditure. But this decision did not cause the sound policy to be observed, and the deficiency bills payable out of the current revenue were met by the fund destined for the extinction of the debt; and so the whole history of the sinking fund, from 1716 up to the last moment, goes to demonstrate the obvious fact, that the redemption of the debt by the application of borrowed capital to the purchase of stock is a sham and a delusion, and that the accumulation by any means of a large amount of the securities of the state in the hands of commissioners has failed in its object of securing inviolate the sinking fund for its destined purpose.” “Dr. Hamilton, of Aberdeen,” observes a writer in the “Encyclopædia Britannica,” “has the merit of having dissipated this extraordinary delusion—the grossest, certainly, by which any civilised nation ever suffered itself to be imposed upon. He showed that the excess of revenue over expenditure is the only real sinking fund, the only means by which any portion of the public debt had ever been, or ever could be, paid off; and that all sinking funds operating at compound interest or otherwise, excepting in as far as they happened to be founded on this principle, were mere quackery and delusion. In fact, upon examining into the matter, it was found that the public debt would have been decidedly less had the sinking fund never been heard of. After such an exposition, the existence of the sinking fund was impossible; and having undergone various modifications, it was finally abolished by the 10th George IV., cap. 27, which enacts that the sum thenceforth annually applicable to the reduction of the public debt shall consist of the *actual surplus revenue beyond the expenditure.*”

Mr. Porter has very concisely expressed the operation of

this financial system in the following words:—“The establishment and support of the sinking fund was long considered as a master-stroke of human wisdom. Having since had sufficient opportunity for considering its effects, we have arrived at a different conclusion, and can no longer see any wisdom in the plan of borrowing larger sums than were wanted, and paying, in consequence, more dearly for the loan of what was actually required, in order to lay out the surplus to accumulate into a fund for buying up the debt at a higher price than that at which it was contracted.”

The following table shows the description of stock on January 5th, 1821, and March 31, 1855:—

	DEBT.		STOCK.		ANNUAL INTEREST.
	£539,947,506	... ..	3 per cents.	... ..	£16,198,425
	30,642,128	... ..	3½	... ..	1,072,474
	75,496,163	... ..	4	... ..	3,019,846
	155,479,513	... ..	5	... ..	7,773,975
1821	£801,565,310				£28,064,720
	DEBT.		STOCK.		ANNUAL INTEREST.
	£3,007,775	... ..	2½ per cents.	... ..	£75,194
	745,333,404	... ..	3	... ..	22,360,002
	2,871,515	... ..	3½	... ..	103,563
	433,124	... ..	5	... ..	21,656
1855	£751,645,818				£22,557,355
UNREDEEMED DEBT. ANNUAL INTEREST.					
At January 5th, 1820	... ..	£794,980,481	... ..	... ..	£27,736,448
At March 31st, 1855	... ..	751,645,818	... ..	... ..	22,557,355
Decrease between January 5th, 1820, and March 31st, 1855	} £43,334,663		... ..	... ..	£5,179,093
Reduction of interest from 1821 to 1854 inclusive:—					
Stock purchased with Sinking Fund	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	£1,932,346
Do. transferred for life annuities, and for annuities for terms of years	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	1,399,878
Do. transferred for redemption of land tax	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	63,301
Do. unclaimed for ten years, and purchased with unclaimed dividends	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	88,737
Do. reduced from a higher to a lower rate of interest	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	17,372,483
Do. paid off	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	994,286
					£21,851,021
Increase of interest during the same years:—					
Stock created by loans	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	£1,805,396
Do. by Exchequer bills, funded	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	983,476
Do. exchanged from a higher to a lower rate of interest	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	13,862,416
Unclaimed stock re-transferred to the proprietors	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	20,697
					16,671,985
* Total reduction of interest...	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	£5,179,046

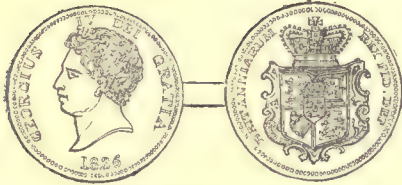
England bears a heavy burden of taxation, yet she does not seem to feel it. Some time ago Mr Disraeli, in the House of Commons, called the National Debt a “flea-bite.” It is not quite so light a matter as that; still, it does not seem to render her step less firm, nor retard her progress, nor give her much trouble. It is a matter of wonder to foreigners how the English people manage to have so much money after paying so smartly in the shape of taxes, and spending so much on food, clothing, and household accommodation. The secret lies in the wonderful industry and thrift in the masses of the people. They work hard, live well, and waste nothing. The number of people who live in England without labouring in any way for their support with head or hand is wonderfully small. Of 5,812,000 males twenty years of age and upwards living in 1831, no less than 5,466,000 were engaged in some calling or profession. In

the census of that year, the population was classified as follows:—In agriculture, 2,470,111; in trade and manufactures, 1,888,768; in labour not agricultural, 698,588; in domestic service, 132,811; as bankers, clergymen, professional men, &c., 275,904. This leaves only about 250,000 men unemployed, which is not much more than the number who were seventy years of age and upwards. The progressive well-being of the middle classes of England has been indicated very satisfactorily by the improved character of their dwellings. If the country is more healthful than the city, one cause may be found in the less crowded state of the habitations. In the country the proportion is about five and a half persons on an average in each house; in London it is about a third more. In Scotland the proportion was six to ten in 1831, and in Ireland it was six

the increase between 1821 and 1847 was 130 per cent. At a meeting of the Statistical Society of London, Colonel Sykes estimated the expense of keeping a man-servant in Great Britain at £70 per annum. Taking £60 as a more moderate estimate, it was found that in 1821 the English people paid £5,000,000 to male servants, and in 1836 £6,250,000. There were at the same time in Great Britain 900,000 female servants, whose board and wages would cost £35 per annum. From these calculations it appears that the cost of domestic servants in Great Britain in the year 1841 was more than £38,000,000. In 1831 there were about 99,000 male servants, and 253,000 female servants in Ireland. Allowing from £10,000,000 to £11,000,000 for their support, we shall have paid for domestic service in the United Kingdom the vast sum of nearly £50,000,000.



HALF-CROWN OF WILLIAM IV.



SOVEREIGN OF GEORGE IV.



SHILLING OF WILLIAM IV.



CROWN OF GEORGE IV.

to twelve, taking the capital in each case as representing the urban population. The number of inhabited houses which England contained in 1821 was 1,952,000; in Ireland the number was 1,142,602; in Scotland it was 641,474. In 1841 the numbers were—England, 2,753,295; Ireland, 1,328,839; Scotland, 503,357. The large increase in Scotland is accounted for by the fact that in the returns of 1841 "flats" were set down as houses, which was not the case in the first return. The tax on inhabited houses rated in three classes from £10 to £20, from £20 to £40, and from £40 up. From the year 1821 to 1833 the houses rated at £40 and upwards increased in England from 69,000 to 84,000. The other two classes of houses increased in about the same proportion. The house duty was repealed in 1834. There was a duty on bricks till 1850, by which means the quantity consumed was ascertained, and

Between the years 1821 and 1841 the use of carriages with four wheels increased 60 per cent.—double the ratio of the increase of the population. In the meantime hired carriages had increased from 20,000 to 33,000. Colonel Sykes counted the cost of keeping a four-wheeled private carriage, including servants, at £250 a-year. This may be too high an estimate; but taking four-wheeled and two-wheeled carriages together, Mr. Porter thinks the average expense was not less than £100 a-year for each, which would give more than £5,000,000 for this luxury in 1821, more than £9,000,000 for 1831, and more than £10,000,000 for 1841—a proof of wealth which no other country in Europe could show. In 1838 there were about 90,000 persons in Great Britain who kept one horse each, and 33,000 who kept two. In 1821 England used nearly 90,000 lbs. of candles, which in 1829 had increased to

110,000 lbs. No excise duty having ever been charged on candles in Ireland, the quantity consumed in that country cannot be ascertained. England paid duty for tallow candles one penny per pound, and for spermaceti three-pence-halfpenny per pound. The amount of revenue from this source in 1821 was £396,000, and in 1830 it rose to upwards of £480,000. The duty was taken off in 1832. The effect of the duty on candles was that no improvement was ever made in their quality; but the moment the manufacturers got free, they began to use their skill to good purpose, and gave a better article at a lower price, greatly to the advantage of the public.

In 1801 property to the value of nearly £200,000,000 was insured against fire; in Ireland, nearly £9,000,000;

and continued to flourish. Mr. Porter estimates that the sums accumulated in the hands of various life insurance offices in the kingdom, which formed part of the savings of the insured, amounted, in 1850, to at least £40,000,000—an amount which would not be considered extravagant when the assets in one office, the Equitable Assurance Company, formed one-fourth of that sum. The legacy duty, also, has afforded evidence of the rapid accumulation of wealth in this country during the last two reigns. The number of persons who died in 1841, and whose property was subjected to legacy and probate duties, was only about 23,000. The sums on which legacy duty was paid in 1819 was £1,300,000,000; in 1824, £1,500,000,000; in 1829, £1,700,000,000; and in 1841 it reached



TRAMPS.

and in Scotland about half that amount. In 1821 Scotland had insured £1,000,000 more than Ireland, and continued thenceforth to leave the latter country far behind in this matter—a fact which is to be mainly ascribed to the progress of manufactures in North Britain. In 1841 England had insured nearly £606,000,000; Scotland, nearly £45,000,000; and Ireland, only £31,000,000. The vast difference here between England and the other parts of the United Kingdom is remarkable. Comparing 1801 with 1841, the amount insured in the three kingdoms had increased at the rate of 193½ per cent. The policy duty on life insurances not being paid annually does not afford the same means of ascertaining the amount insured on lives; but there is no doubt that it was very large, considering the number of life insurance offices that were established,

two billions. "The addition of £1,000,000,000 to the value of property during thirty-one years of peace," says Mr. Porter, "will not appear improbable if we recall to mind the fact that during the last ten years of the war the public expenditure exceeded on an average £83,000,000 a year, while the average in the following twenty-four years did not exceed £50,000,000. The difference between these two sums would alone suffice in that period to make up the sum of £1,000,000,000. In the year 1838 £790,000 was paid as probate duty in Great Britain, upon about 17,000 wills, bequeathing property to the amount of nearly £46,000,000, of which £2,500,000 only belonged to Scotland. In the same year the amount of duty paid upon letters of administration was £137,000, upon 6,000 estates, value nearly £5,000,000. The duty on probates

was £790,000, on nearly £46,000,000 of capital; the total being for administrations and probates duty £928,000, on capital amounting to £50,500,000, of which about £300,000 belonged to Scotland. No mortality tables had been published for Ireland, but it was ascertained that probate and administration duties in that country in 1838 were paid upon 2,196 estates, representing a capital of about £4,500,000. Assuming the same rate of mortality that existed in England and Wales, it would appear that the personal property in Ireland which in succession contributes to this branch of the revenue is about £168,000,000. In the half century ending with the accession of Victoria, the capital on which legacy duty had been paid in Great Britain was £1,470,000,000. The legacy duty in the same period amounted to £43,500,000, and the duty on probates and administrations to £35,000,000. The average receipts from probate duty generally have been steadily increasing with the progressive prosperity of the country.

The proofs of this prosperity have been exhibited in various other ways. In 1815 the yearly value of dwelling-houses in England and Wales was £14,000,000 for nearly 10,000,000 of people; in 1841 the yearly rental was £23,000,000 for under 16,000,000 of people; which, reckoning the rental at twenty years' purchase, shows an investment in houses of capital amounting to £180,000,000 in twenty-six years. Counting since the peace in 1815, it has been estimated that the real property of England and Wales in the form of additional dwellings must have absorbed £240,000,000 of capital. Sir Robert Peel, in bringing forward his proposal for an income tax in 1842, assumed the value of real property in Great Britain to be as follows:—Rent of land, £39,400,000; rent of houses, £25,000,000; tithes, mines, &c., £8,400,000: total, £72,800,000, which, at twenty-five years' purchase, would be equal to a capital of £1,820,000,000. The annual value of real property actually assessed to the property and income tax in 1843, turned out to be much more than Sir Robert Peel estimated, amounting to more than £95,000,000 a year.

Savings-banks afford a very good index to the improved condition of the working classes. In 1830 the total number of depositors in the United Kingdom was 412,000; and the amount deposited, £13,500,000. In 1840 the number of depositors had increased to nearly 800,000, and the amount to £23,500,000. The total number of depositors in 1845 was 1,000,000, and the amount of investments nearly £33,000,000. Of this sum, domestic servants, nearly all females, deposited £80,000.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Social Progress (*continued*)—The Family—German View of the English Home—Houseless Population—Division of Population in Town and Country—Civilising Influence of Cities—Popular Education—Sunday School's—Raikes—Day Schools—Lancaster—The British and Foreign School Society—The Monitorial System—Dr. Bell—The National Society—Progress of Popular Education—The Agency of the Religious Bodies—Auxiliary Action of the Government—Committee of the Privy Council on Education—Parliamentary Grants—Proportion of the Population attending School—Number of Children not at School—Average Time at School—The Improvement of Teachers—Training Colleges: their Cost—Endowed Schools and their Funds—The Enterprise and Re-

sources of the Religious Bodies in Popular Education: the Church of England; the Independents; the Wesleyans; the Baptists; the Roman Catholics—Evening Schools—Literary and Scientific Institutions—The Social Influence of Sunday Schools—Progress of Education in Scotland and in Ireland—Evils of Popular Ignorance—Effects of Popular Education on Crime—Mitigation of the Criminal Code—Paucity of Educated Criminals—Educated Females.

In pursuance of the plan we have sketched, we now proceed to notice the intellectual, moral, and religious agencies by which the higher life of British society has been sustained. The basis of our social system is the family, the household, the domestic constitution—the little community that exists in the Englishman's home. This is not to be considered merely as comprising the children of one parent, but the persons under one head, who is the occupier of the house, the householder, master, husband, or father; while the other members of the family are the wife, children, servants, relatives, visitors, and persons constantly or accidentally in the house. The head of the family "occupies" the house, supports and rules its inmates. "Family," in the sense which it has acquired in England, may be considered the social unit of which parishes, towns, counties, and the nation are composed. In the Act for taking the census of 1851, "occupier" is substituted for "family," and is described as a resident owner, or person who paid rent, whether as a tenant for the whole of the house, or as a lodger for any distinct floor or apartment. In Great Britain the number of families in 1801 was 2,260,802. At the close of the half-century, it had increased to 4,312,388; so that the number was nearly doubled in that time. In England and Wales it was still higher; the increase being from 1,896,723 to 3,712,290: consequently, 1,815,567 new lines of English families had been established in the country in fifty years. The increase in Scotland, too, has been very large—from 364,000 to 600,000, notwithstanding the alleged proneness of the Scotch to wander from the land of their birth, and to settle in southern latitudes. In the year 1844, Dr. Carus, the physician of the king of Saxony, in describing his master's journey through England and Scotland, makes the following remarks upon English dwellings, and the social effects of our domestic isolation:—"I cannot take leave of this subject without a remark on English dwelling-houses, which stand in close connection with that long-cherished principle of separation and retirement lying at the very foundation of the national character. It appears to me to be this principle which has given to the people that fixity of national character, and strict adherence to the historical usages of their country, by which they are so much distinguished; and up to the present moment, the Englishman still perseveres in striving after a certain individuality and personal independence—a certain separation of himself from others, which constitutes the foundation of his freedom. This, too, was completely an ancient German tendency, which led our remote ancestors to prefer the rudest and most inconvenient, but isolated homesteads, to the more convenient and refined method of life in aggregation; it is this that gives the Englishman that proud feeling of personal independence, which is stereotyped in the phrase, 'Every man's house is his castle.' This is a feeling which cannot be entertained,

and an expression which cannot be used, in Germany or France, where ten or fifteen families often live together in the same large house. The expression, however, receives a true value when, by the mere closing of the house-door, the family is able, to a certain extent, to cut itself off from all communication with the outward world, even in the midst of great cities. In English towns or villages, therefore, one always meets either with small detached houses, merely suited to one family, or apparently large buildings, extending to the length of half a street, sometimes adorned like palaces on the exterior, but separated by partition walls internally, and thus divided into a great number of small, high houses, for the most part three windows broad, within which, and on the various storeys, the rooms are divided according to the wants or convenience of the family; in short, therefore, it may be properly said, that the English divide their edifices perpendicularly into houses, whilst we Germans divide them horizontally into floors. In England every man is master of his hall, stairs, and chambers; whilst we are obliged to use the two first in common with others, and are scarcely able to secure ourselves the privacy of our own chambers, if we are not fortunate enough to be able to obtain a secure and convenient house for ourselves alone."

On this the editor of the census returns for 1851 makes the following remarks:—"The possession of an entire house is, it is true, strongly desired by every Englishman; for it throws a sharp, well-defined circle round his family and hearth—the shrine of his sorrows, joys, and meditations. This feeling, as it is natural, is universal; but it is stronger in England than it is on the Continent; for although there the great bulk of the population in the country is in separate dwellings, while in many English towns several families are in the same house, the crowding to which Dr. Carus refers, of the middle and higher classes, who sleep on flats, *stratum over stratum*, is carried to an inconceivably greater excess in capitals and the other cities of the Continent than it is in England. The department of the Seine, for instance, in 1835-6, contained 50,467 houses, and 1,106,891 persons, or twenty-two persons to a house; so that there must be four or five families in Paris to a house; whilst London, in 1851, contained 2,362,236 persons, 533,580 occupiers, in 305,933 houses; and consequently, nearly eight persons to one house; or, more exactly, seventy-seven persons, forming seventeen families, to ten houses. It will be shown that, in a certain number of English towns, fifteen, twenty, and twenty-four families are in ten houses on an average; but these cases are exceptional, and the general rule is, that each family in England has a house."

But there was a population sleeping in barns, in tents, and in the open air, comprising, with some honest but unfortunate people out of employment, or temporarily employed, gipsies, beggars, strollers, vagabonds, vagrants, outcasts, and criminals. The actual number of houseless population was estimated in 1841 at more than 22,000, of whom about half slept in barns. If we include the occupants of barges, vessels in the ports engaged in inland navigation, and sea-going vessels in port, we shall have

83,000 persons not living in houses, of whom about 8,000 were females.

At the census of 1851, the most complete ever taken, it was found that the number of towns in England and Wales was 580, with a population, including London, of nearly 9,000,000, while the population of villages and detached dwellings in the country was about the same amount. Scotland had 225 towns, which contained considerably more than half her population—that is, 1,497,000. The average population to each town in England was 15,500; and in Scotland, 6,600. London extends over an area of 78,029 acres on the sides of the Thames, into Kent, Surrey, and Middlesex; and the number of its inhabitants, continually increasing, was 2,362,236. The collection of so large a portion of the population in towns, combined with facility of communication, while it has its disadvantages, no doubt, in point of health and morals, greatly favours social progress and civilisation, by enabling the people to take advantage of various institutions for their education and improvement. It is owing to the peculiar advantages of urban life, that the increase of population in the half of this century nearly equalled the increase in all preceding ages, and that the increase in the ten years of 1841 to 1851 exceeded the increase of the last *fifty* years of the eighteenth century, notwithstanding the constant flow of contemporaneous emigration. The poet speaks regretfully of the time when population was so dense that "every rood maintained its man;" but that is a poetical fiction. Instead of diminishing in proportion to the territory, the population has been gaining; so that in the last half-century the number of acres to each person living has fallen from about five to two in Great Britain, and in England and Wales from four to two. But it has been justly remarked by the editor of the census returns, that there are countervailing advantages in this diminution of territory, in the facts that the people have been brought into each other's neighbourhood, their average distance from each other has been reduced in the ratio of three to two, labour has been divided, industry has been organised in towns, and the quantity of produce, either consisting of, or exchangeable for, the conveniences, elegancies, and necessities of life, has in the mass largely increased, and is increasing at a more rapid rate than the population. The effects of association and collision in town populations are increased mental activity, intelligence, and refinement. This improved state of things reacts upon the country; for the walls, gates, and castles which were destroyed in the civil wars have never been rebuilt, and the population has outgrown the ancient limits, while stone lines of demarcation have not been drawn round the new centres. Our people have never been pestered with the continental system of *octroi*, involving the examination by customs' officers of every article entering the town. By the Municipal Reform Act, all exclusive privileges were abolished, and every town was thrown open to settlers from every quarter. Whilst the respective populations of the town and country have been equally balanced—ten millions against ten millions—the predominance of the civilising urban influences has been maintained by the innumerable relationships of commerce, by constant intercourse, and by a

thousand ties of kindred and affection, arising chiefly from the fact that a large proportion of the population in the market towns, the county towns, the manufacturing towns, and the metropolis, were born in the country. The town and country populations are now so intimately commingled, that the same administrative arrangements are easily applied to the whole kingdom. The activity, the intelligence, and the growing religious feeling of the people has led to an increased demand for instruction, both secular and religious, and we now proceed to show how far this demand has been met in the United Kingdom.

Popular education may be said to be almost entirely the work of the present century; and the transformation it has effected in society is so great, that if we could behold it in contrast with the state of things at the close of the last century, it would appear little short of miraculous. "Comparison is scarcely possible between the groups of gambling, swearing children (no unfavourable example of young England then), when Raikes, of Gloucester, in 1781, with difficulty collected the 'first Sunday school,' and any single class of the 2,400,000 scholars who now gather with alacrity, and even with affection, round their 318,000 teachers. In contemplating the various agencies by which, throughout the intervening period, the habits of the people have been so conspicuously improved, it is of course impossible to assign to each its positive share of influence in accomplishing this change; but it may very safely be affirmed that no small portion of the happy transformation is attributable to the vast accession which has been effected in the number of our daily and Sunday schools."*

Sunday schools were first in the educational race. The work which the Gloucester publisher originated rapidly advanced; religious bodies, more especially Dissenters, heartily embraced the plan; and the present century has seen the principle so extended, that scarcely any regular place of worship now existing is without its Sunday school. "The same awakened sense of neighbourly responsibility, which thus produced the Sunday school, soon after gave a mighty impulse to the work of daily education." The founder of the popular day school system was a youthful Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, who opened a school in his father's house, in Southwark, to instruct the children of the poor, in the year 1796. He made but a small charge, which he remitted to those who were unable to pay, and often furnished food to the most destitute. His pupils numbered ninety before he was eighteen years old, and afterwards they came pouring in upon him "like flocks of sheep," till in two years they reached 1,000. In order to meet the difficulty about teachers for so many, he divided them into classes, and adopted the monitorial system, which succeeded so well that he went through the country lecturing on the subject, establishing schools for the poor, raising funds for their support, and ultimately obtaining the patronage of royalty. But he was not the man to guide the movement he had so successfully originated. Ardent, enthusiastic, visionary—possessing the most needed qualities for a pioneer and a missionary—he was desti-

tute of the prudence, steadiness, business habits, and administrative ability necessary for the management of an established system. He accordingly became embarrassed, and was "tossed about through varied troubles, passing from a prison to prosperity, and then again to bankruptcy, until, in 1818, he departed for America, where, after twenty years of suffering, brightened by some intervals of popularity, but none of prudence, his life was terminated by an accident, in 1838, in the streets of New York." A society was formed in 1808, called "The Royal Lancasterian Institution, for Promoting the Education of the Children of the Poor." A few years after the name was altered, and it was called "The British and Foreign School Society."

It has been a matter of dispute whether Lancaster invented the monitorial system, or borrowed it from Dr. Bell, who had made an experiment in the employment of juvenile instructors six years before, in the military orphan school at Madras. Bell, the son of a Scotchman, a barber, of St. Andrew's, was as remarkable for prudence as Lancaster was for improvidence. Having returned from India, he became successively rector of Swanage, master of Sherborne Hospital, and prebendary of Hereford and Westminster. He died in 1832, bequeathing his large fortune of £120,000 principally to the educational institutions of his native country. His name as an educationist has always been associated with the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the principles of the Established Church, which was founded in 1811. From that time the work of popular education made considerable progress, chiefly through the agency of these two societies; several liberal statesmen, among whom the name of Henry Brougham always shone conspicuous, lending their zealous advocacy to the support of the cause. The earliest statistics by which the progress of popular education may be measured are contained in the parliamentary returns of 1813, when there were in England and Wales nearly 20,000 day schools, with about 675,000 scholars, which were in the proportion of 1 in 17 of the population. There were also 5,463 Sunday schools, with 477,000 scholars, or 1 in 24 of the population. Lord Kerry's parliamentary returns for 1833 showed the number of day schools and scholars to be nearly doubled, and the proportion to be 1 in 11 of the population. The Sunday schools, during the same period, were trebled in number, and also in the aggregate of children attending; while their proportion to the population was 1 in 9—the population having in the interval increased 24 per cent., the day scholars 89 per cent., and the Sunday scholars 225 per cent.

Up to this time (1833), the work of education was conducted by private liberality, incited mainly by religious zeal, and acting through the agencies of the two great societies, the British and the National. In that year the government came to their aid, and a grant of £20,000 a year continued to be made till 1839, which was shared between the two societies, representing two educational parties, who then commenced a strife that has not yet ended. The principle of the British and Foreign School Society, chiefly supported by Dissenters, was, that the Bible should be read without note or comment in the schools, and that

* "The Census of Education," by Horace Mann, Esq., to whose admirable report we beg once for all to acknowledge our obligations.

there should be no catechism admitted, or special religious instruction of any kind. The schools of the National Society, on the other hand, were strictly Church schools, in which the Church Catechism must be taught. In 1839 and 1843 two measures were proposed, by which it was intended to provide for a more immediate influence of the state in connection with the popular education it supported, by the establishment of a government normal school and the education of children in factories. But the first of these was defeated by the opposition of the Church, and the second by the hostility of the Dissenters. "It was thus made manifest," says Mr. Horace Mann, "that the decisive tendency of fifty years of private educational enterprise had been to bring the education of the people into such a close connection with religious bodies, that for any prudent government it was impracticable either, on the one hand, to ignore the agency of such communities, or, on the other, in applying to educational purposes funds raised by general taxation, to recognise the predominance of any particular section. Consequently, the action of the government has ever since been limited to a co-operation with religious bodies, so far as the latter have been willing to accept its aid, each grant being made conditional upon a previous voluntary contribution in a specified proportion to the grant. In 1839 the duty of administering these parliamentary funds was transferred from the treasury to the committee of privy council on education—not, however, without considerable opposition, on the ground of the supposed unconstitutional and irresponsible character of the suggested board."

Simultaneously, the amount of the annual sum assigned for education was increased. From 1839 till 1841 inclusive it was fixed at £30,000; £40,000 was allowed for 1842-3-4; and the augmentations subsequently raised it up to £75,000 in 1845, £100,000 in 1846-7, £125,000 in 1848-9-50, £150,000 in 1851-2, and £260,000 in 1853. The total amount of public money granted from 1833 to the end of 1850 was as nearly as possible £1,000,000; and the portion expended in that interval was about £750,000. None of this was given towards the expense of maintaining schools, but either towards the cost of buildings, for the purchase of school apparatus, or in aid of the salaries of efficient masters, mistresses, and teachers. Prior to 1847, however, no grants were made for any purposes except in aid of building schools, and in aid of normal schools. Part was appropriated to Scotland. Of the £500,000 spent between 1839 and 1850 upon English schools, £405,000 was contributed to schools connected with the Established Church, the other denominations receiving—Wesleyans, £8,000, and Roman Catholics, £1,049. The British and Foreign School Society received £51,000, and the work-house schools, £37,000.

The following statement will show the number of existing schools at different periods, and mark more distinctly the progress of popular education. Before the beginning of the present century there were in England and Wales only 3,363 schools, public and private. In the first ten years of the century more than 1,000 new ones were founded; in the second ten years, 2,200; in the third ten years, 3,482; in the fourth, 7,467; and from

1841 to 1851 no less than 22,214. There were added besides, at dates not specified, upwards of 6,000: the total number in 1841 being 46,000, of which 30,000 were private. These statistics indicate an immense amount of private energy and enterprise, the more gratifying from the fact that the greater portion of the progress was due to the working classes themselves. It was estimated by Mr. Edward Baines in 1846 that one-ninth of the population is as large a proportion as we ought to expect to be attending school; and the public generally concurred in the correctness of his calculations in his letters to Lord John Russell. Other writers considered one-eighth, allowing an average of five years and a half school instruction for all children between five and fifteen years of age. According to these data, the number who ought to be at school, if not prevented by various causes—such as the demand for juvenile labour—is nearly 5,000,000 in England and Wales. But the demand for juvenile labour is very great, and it was found that in 1851 about 600,000 children were engaged in remunerative work. After allowing for illness, and other unpreventable causes, it was ascertained that there should be 3,000,000 children at school in England and Wales; but the actual number in attendance in 1851 fell short of that estimate by 968,000 healthy, unemployed children, between the ages of five and twelve, who were not at school at all. This arose partly from their parents being unable to pay the fees, but chiefly from their culpable indifference and neglect, many of the unfortunate beings allowed to grow up in heathenish ignorance being the children of the criminal classes; for which state of things the most effective remedy would be the elevation of the working classes, and next, the establishment of ragged schools. After all deductions are made for employment, illness, and home education, and supposing parents to be universally willing to have their children educated, the total that could have been at school in England and Wales twelve years ago was 3,663,000. It was found that the average school time of all children in England and Wales, between the third and fifteenth years, was about five years.

Great improvements had been effected in the art of teaching. Both the British and the National Societies from the beginning devoted much attention to the training of efficient teachers. In 1828 the former sent out 87 trained teachers; in 1838 as many as 183. The National Society commenced a training institution in 1811, and after forty years' progress it had five training colleges, sending out 270 teachers every year. This department of progress has been greatly indebted to one of the most enlightened and zealous of our educational reformers, Sir James Kaye Shuttleworth. At the census of 1851 there were about forty training colleges in England and Wales, sustained at an annual cost of about £90,000. Of these, thirty-four were connected with the Church of England, one belonged to the British and Foreign School Society, one to the Congregationalists, one to the Wesleyan Methodists, one to the Roman Catholics, and one to the Voluntary School Association. The last, as its name imports, is conducted on the voluntary principle, and the Congregationalists also decline state support for their training

school, which cost £12,000. The amount of parliamentary grants for building those institutions was about £120,000, out of the aggregate cost of about £310,000. The number of students accommodated in these colleges is about 2,000; the cost of their education being £50 a year for males, and £40 for females.

The number of endowed schools, respecting which returns were given in 1851, was 304 collegiate and grammar schools, with 17,000 scholars; and 1,600 other endowed schools, with 112,000 scholars—total about 1,900 schools, with 130,000 scholars, having a total income of about £289,000 a year. But this gives a very inadequate idea of the whole amount of endowments, which Lord Brougham estimated at £500,000 a year, and other writers have expressed a similar opinion. A very large proportion of it was diverted from its purposes, and misappropriated, so that funds intended for the education of the poor and the working classes have been monopolised by some of the most wealthy and aristocratic schools in the kingdom. "The action of the religious bodies," says Mr. Horace Mann, "in the matter of popular education, has throughout the present century been powerful, extensive, and increasing, and the present result of their exertions constitutes by far the most important and conspicuous feature of our educational position. It is scarcely possible to avoid being deeply impressed by the accumulated evidence we now apparently possess of the inexhaustible resources and illimitable enterprises of religious zeal. The fact that this unwearied agency, which in little more than half a century has erected 20,000 places of religious worship, founded 23,000 Sunday schools, containing 2,250,000 scholars, and brought within the compass of Christian charity the utmost regions of the globe—the fact that this insatiable benevolence has almost wholly reared, and is now in greater part sustaining upwards of *ten thousand day schools*, in which more than a *million* children of the poorer classes are from day to day instructed, cannot but excite a lively sense, not only of the obligations under which the country lies to the workings of religious principle, but also the vast extent to which in future all the institutions of popular education must be necessarily pervaded by religious influence."*

Further on the same writer remarks that the extent to which religious bodies are assuming the control of popular education is continually and rapidly increasing, and also that it had become a matter of denominational activity, and he adds:—"This tendency, so far as the Dissenters are concerned, has only recently been evidenced; for schools upon the *British* system (which discourages sectarian teaching) satisfied their wants till about ten years ago. The controversies of that period, however, when it seemed to the Dissenters that the government designed to place too much of the education of the poor in the hands of the Established Church, produced very great exertions on the part of the various bodies to counteract this supposed design; and the schools which were erected as a consequence of these exertions naturally were connected with the sects by which they were origi-

nated—to whose interests, indeed, they were intended as a sort of bulwark. How far this denominational action is henceforward to proceed is a very important question. It is clear, however, that Dissenting bodies are not likely to be represented in proportion to their numbers by the day schools which their small comparative wealth will enable them to raise and carry on; exposed, too, as many of them must be, to the competition of schools aided by the public funds. An interesting problem, therefore, is before us—'How is the education of poor children of Dissenting parents to be provided for, in order to secure religious liberty?' At first sight, it appears inevitable that in course of time the mass of the population educated of necessity in Church of England schools must gradually return to that community; but in opposition to this natural anticipation is the curious fact, that, while for many years past at least *four-fifths* of all the children who have passed through public schools must have been instructed in the schools of the Church of England, concurrently with this a very considerable acquisition has (according to the tables of religious worship) been proceeding in the number of Dissenters; so that now they comprise very nearly half of the total population. This appears to prove that either the education given by the Church has been administered on very tolerant and liberal principles, or else the sectarian and doctrinal instruction of the day school is extremely ineffective in comparison with those religious influences which the scholar meets elsewhere."*

The great educational organ of the Church of England is the National Society, founded in 1811, and incorporated by royal charter in 1815. Its annual income from subscriptions and other contributions amounted to £14,000 or £15,000 a year. At various times since 1823 a royal letter was issued, sanctioning parochial collections for the society, and this appeal ultimately became triennial. The amount collected in 1823 was £28,000; in 1832, £23,000; in 1837, £24,000; and in 1840, £30,000. Connected with the central institution, local boards of education have, since 1839, been founded in nearly every diocese, with an aggregate income of about £20,000 annually. Including diocesan institutions, the number of trained teachers sent out annually under the society was about 400 masters and 250 mistresses. The Church has been very active of late years in the work of education; the number of new schools opened between 1831 and 1841 being 2,000; and the number during the next ten years being 3,400. The total annual income at the disposal of the Church from various sources for carrying on the work of popular education was estimated in 1850 at about £500,000.

The Independents, or Congregationalists, rank next to the Church in the amount of the work done in the cause of popular education. Until 1843 they did not take any separate denominational action in regard to it, though they had been active and liberal supporters of the cause in connection with the British and Foreign School Society. In the census returns, 453 schools were stated to belong to this denomination, 185 of which were British schools; the total number of scholars in both classes being 50,000. This,

* Census, 1851—Education, p. 49.

* Census, 1851—Education, p. 53.

however, did not completely represent the efforts made by Congregationalists, as no inconsiderable part of the contributions which supported the undenominational British schools proceeded from members of that body. They, however, as a body, holding the voluntary principle, came to the conclusion to refuse any grant of public money, on the ground that popular education ought to be religious, and that public money ought in no case to be given to provide religious teaching. They accordingly instituted the Congregational Board of Education, and established a system of their own, in harmony with their principles.

The Wesleyan Methodists came next, and they had 381

supervision of all matters relating to Wesleyan education. The stimulus applied by this committee seems to have been effectual, for in 1840 the number of schools had increased to 100, having 8,000 scholars; and about this period, by a grant of £5,000 from the Centenary Fund, the committee first began their work of training teachers, sending them with that design to the Glasgow Normal Seminary.

The Roman Catholics stand forth among the denominations of England in the number of day-schools which they more or less support, having 339, containing 41,000 scholars. By virtue of a special minute in their favour, they received aid from the parliamentary grant, and they



SIR JAMES P. KAY SHUTTLEWORTH.

day-schools, with 41,000 scholars. Most of these, however, were established since 1841, as up to that period they had not many more than 100 schools. The children of the poorer classes of Wesleyan parents had generally been instructed either in the British or Church of England schools. No formal action by the Conference was taken till 1833, and then it was only in the shape of a recommendation that schools should be established wherever practicable. In 1836, however, a committee was appointed on the subject, which reported the existence of thirty-one schools, and in 1837 was formed an "Educational Committee," consisting of fifteen ministers and fifteen laymen, with treasurer and secretary, charged with the general

had a government inspector of their own, appointed with the sanction of their "poor school committee." In 1821 they had only thirty-four schools in England; in 1841 they had added about 100 more; and in the next ten years, 166.

The Baptists were found to have 131 schools of their own, containing 9,000 scholars. They are, however, generally adverse to denominational action in the matter of day-school education; hence the resources of the body are in a great degree applied to the support of purely British schools. Their teachers were usually trained at the Borough Road Institution, until that society accepted government aid, since which event they are generally

obtained from the training establishment of the Voluntary School Society. In connection with this subject, the Baptist Union passed a resolution that a decided preference is due to the system of co-operation with the friends of Scriptural education at large over that of forming denominational schools, thus differing in opinion from Sir J. K. Shuttleworth, who maintained that public education is the work of the religious communions.

This review of the progress of popular education in England and Wales must not be regarded as a complete view of what has been done up to the present time, which must be reserved for future consideration. But in order to show what had been accomplished up to the beginning of the present reign, it was necessary to anticipate a little while drawing upon the only complete source of information—the educational census of 1851. In order to meet the case of children employed during the day, evening schools were established by benevolent persons. With regard to the extent and operation of these schools, the information is scanty. But with regard to evening schools for adults, and mechanics' institutions, which are classed under the head of secondary education, the returns are most satisfactory. There were about 1,500 evening schools for grown-up persons, containing about 40,000 students, of whom 12,000 were females, the amount of the payments varying from one penny to two shillings per week. It is interesting to notice the classes of persons who most freely avail themselves of their advantages. There were 386 soldiers, 1,300 domestic servants, 200 clerks, 6,000 agricultural labourers, 180 knitters, 4,600 factory hands, 14,000 artisans, and 274 miners. The course of instruction comprised the usual branches of a good English education, with modern languages, classics, drawing, music, singing, and elocution. Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire greatly exceeded all other counties in England in the number of these evening schools. There were, besides, many mutual improvement societies established in connection with Sunday-schools. The establishment of literary, scientific, and mechanics' institutions was a distinguishing characteristic of the era of progress now under review. The census commissioners received intelligence of more than 1,000 of these institutions, of which no less than 155 were in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and 97 in Lancaster. The large number of these valuable institutions in Yorkshire was ascribed, in a great degree, to the operations of the Yorkshire Union and Mechanics' Institute, of which Mr. Edward Baines, its founder, was the president. This union, by its meetings, reports, lectures, itinerating village libraries, and other operations for increasing the number and improving the management of these institutions, was exceedingly useful.

With reference to the social influence of *Sunday-schools*, Mr. Horace Mann makes some remarks, which deserve special attention. He thinks that, notwithstanding the defects of Sunday-school instruction, its social results are but ill appreciated. "We perceive, indeed, the great improvement which has taken place within the last half-century in the manners of the people, their growing attachment to the cause of order and sobriety; and the contrast of our land in this respect with other countries often furnishes

theme for gratulation; but the share which Sunday-schools have taken in effecting this desirable result is probably to a great extent unrecognised. And yet the constant action on the minds of the youthful population of more than 250,000 of religious teachers, not removed in general by age or sex from sympathy with their companions—each, too, having such a limited number of scholars as to make the influence direct and personal—must needs be working silently a great result. Intelligent familiarity with scriptural facts and doctrines must be gradually extending through the masses of society, and though, if tested merely by attendance on religious ordinances, much of this instruction may appear to be in vain, yet doubtless in a thousand other ways, though imperceptible, the influence exerted in the Sunday-school is more or less prolonged throughout the subsequent career, and mainly helps to bring about that increase of morality and deference to law on which from time to time our public writers dwell with much complacency. Indeed, it may be very fairly questioned whether Sunday-school instructors do not exercise an influence in moulding the religious mind of the community considerably more extensive and more potent than proceeds from all the pulpits in the land. But this extensive influence does not result exclusively from the mere instruction which is given. The position and the character of the teachers—members of the middle class—the evident disinterestedness of their gratuitous exertions, the personal attachment which not seldom binds a teacher to his pupils, and the friendly interest with which he often aids them in their secular career—all these, and many more *collateral* advantages of Sunday-schools, combine to give the system its extensive and benignant power. Much more, it is true, might be accomplished in this way than is effected, for the *capabilities* of Sunday-schools in this respect are almost boundless, but the actual and present efforts are of striking value. Visits from the teachers to the scholars in their homes are frequent, and not rare are visits from the scholars to the teachers. Many schools sustain week evening classes, where the scholars are instructed in some secular art or knowledge; many have libraries for the scholars' use, and some have originated for the senior scholars mutual improvement societies, where lectures are delivered, and other means of intellectual progress are provided. Nor are the physical wants of Sunday-scholars and their parents without some alleviation. Sick clubs, and provident clubs, and penny banks are frequently established in connection with Sunday-schools. Excursions, too, and festivals in which the children and their teachers join in recreation, are now universal. Thus there is in some degree (although too small) a constant kindly intercourse between the different classes of society; and thus, perhaps, have been gradually fostered in the minds of the working people juster sentiments than hitherto have been received of the disposition of the class by fortune placed above them. But in this department of its usefulness the Sunday-school is yet but in its infancy, awaiting, probably, the time when ministers and influential members of the church shall recognise its undeveloped power for good. *Their* zealous aid appears to be the only thing required in order that the great advan-

tages, direct and incidental, of the system may be fully realised, the youthful population get a sound religious education, and the sad estrangement now too visible between the different sections of society be gradually healed. It is doubtless much to be desired that more attention should be paid by the higher classes of the church to the working of what now has every appearance of a permanent institution; for no expectation, probably, can be indulged that the natural instructors of their children in religious knowledge—viz., parents—will be ever generally able and disposed to undertake and prosecute this duty; and it seems to be quite clear that the ordinary services of church and chapel are entirely inappropriate and unproductive to the juvenile community. Both, therefore, as a necessary and effective institution for the spiritual culture of the young, and as a most important means of binding up in harmony the various orders of the people, Sunday-schools appear to their supporters to be worthy of the countenance and active aid of the highest intelligence of the Christian church.*

The progress of education in Scotland may be briefly stated. The total number of scholars and day-schools respecting which information had been obtained was 368,517; the population of Scotland was then 2,888,742; so that there was 1 scholar to every 7·84 inhabitants. Making allowance for deficient returns, it was estimated that 14 per cent., or 1 in 7, of the people of Scotland were at school. The number who, in answer to the question as to occupation on the householder's schedule were returned as "scholars," was 426,566. This is a curious and suggestive fact, as it represents the number engaged in study as about one-sixth of the whole population. In the department of Sunday or Sabbath-schools, however, there was not so much activity in Scotland as in England. In the latter country Sunday-scholars amounted to 13 per cent. of the population, while in the former it was only 10 per cent. The number of scholars was thus distributed between the different denominations—Established Church, 76,000; Free Church, 91,000; United Presbyterian Church, 54,000; Roman Catholics, 13,000; Independents, 12,000. Evening schools for adults were numerous in Scotland, and formed an interesting department of popular education. Returns were received from 438 of them, containing 15,000 scholars. They were attended by 500 agricultural labourers, 250 lead-miners, 186 coal-miners, 343 coal and iron operatives, 4,300 artisans, 2,300 factory operatives, 350 weavers, 280 warehousemen, and 500 domestic servants. There were in Scotland 221 literary, scientific, and mechanics' institutions, conducted like those in England, and contributing largely to the diffusion of useful knowledge among the people.

The following sketch of educational progress in Ireland is founded chiefly upon parliamentary blue books and other authentic reports. The Association for Discountenancing Vice, and Promoting the Knowledge of the Christian Religion, was founded in 1792, and originated in a dread of French democracy and infidelity. Its members first devoted themselves to the circulation of Bibles, prayer-books,

and catechisms, but afterwards schools for the poor were embraced within the sphere of their operations. This was from the beginning strictly a church society; the masters and mistresses must be members of the Establishment, appointed by the incumbent; the Bible must be read by all who had attained sufficient proficiency, and the catechism learned as part of the school business by the children of the church. The schools were supported partly by subscriptions and partly by public grants. The report of 1828 states that the total amount voted by parliament from 1800 to 1827 (when the grant was withdrawn), was £101,991 18s. 6d. It is true that, owing to the influence of landlords, the great want of tolerable schools, and other circumstances, a considerable number of Roman Catholic children crept stealthily to some of these schools. But this was in many, perhaps most cases, the effect of a compromise made privately by the master, and unknown to the inspectors and visitors, or winked at by them, though violating one of the rules. The schools of the association amounted in 1824 to 226, and the number of children to 12,607, of which it was stated that 7,803 were Protestants, and 4,804 Roman Catholics. This was a small number for a population of 6,000,000. But the Rev. Mr. Lee, who had inspected 104 of these schools in 1819 and 1820, stated before the commissioners in 1824 that he had found the catechism of the Church of Rome in many of them. This fact accounts for the attendance of even the small number of Roman Catholics reported. As another proof of the immoral tendencies of exclusiveness, it may be mentioned that fifty-two masters were dismissed from these schools in the course of five years.

Next in the order of time comes the London Hibernian Society, founded in 1806 on the catholic principle by Christian men of great benevolence, and with the best feelings towards the people of Ireland; but many of them were ignorant of the circumstances and history of the country, and as their object, though disavowed in words, was the destruction of the Church of Rome in Ireland, and as this object was pursued with a certain kind of secrecy, and by holding out various inducements to the cupidity of the unprincipled, they were obliged to work with agencies that were not always trustworthy. The reading of the Bible was enforced, but all catechisms and works of controversy were excluded. The parish clergyman was an *ex-officio* visitor, but other ministers were not excluded. The school-books were ill-adapted for their purpose, from the absurd rule to insert in them no words not found in the Bible. The very object sought by this was completely defeated, for in every difficult word in the Bible the reader recognised an old enemy which had tortured him in the perplexing and ill-arranged columns of his spelling-book. The Scriptures were committed to memory, and as the progress of the children was estimated and rewarded according to the number of verses they could repeat, the memory was worked to excess at the expense of the judgment and the conscience. The master being paid according to the number of the pupils, led to great frauds. Roman Catholic children were charitably lent in scores to "enter an appearance" on the day of inspection; and to those who attended constantly, their catechism was taught, contrary to a funda-

* Census, 1851—"Education," p. 74.

mental rule. This society became by degrees more episcopal and conservative, till at length it found it advantageous to separate itself from dissenters altogether. It is now merged in the Church Education Society.

It is absurd to suppose that educational societies like these, coming in the train of the tainted charter school system, with similar principles and purposes, though guided by a far more Christian spirit, were competent to educate the Catholic poor of Ireland. It is not credible that the people would freely allow their children to be trained up by strangers in hatred of the religion for which their fathers had suffered the loss of all things, and in the principles of a church in whose name so much social injustice had been inflicted. The vast majority preferred paying for education, such as it was, in the hedge-schools which abounded in the country. It may be said, and in many cases truly said, that they would receive a Protestant education for their children, if not prevented by their clergy. But so long as it is a principle of their faith to obey those clergy, and of our law to tolerate them, what do we gain by treating Catholic subjects as slaves without conscience? Is it not far better, by a good general education and free institutions, to prepare the people themselves to assert a manly independence? Why keep meanly and tortuously hankering after a principle of government which is utterly impracticable, and has been for ever abandoned by the legislature? We can no longer subvert Popery by a tax on Papists. Neither can we do it by voluntary or charity schools, which tamper with conscience, and generate a mean and pauper spirit. Education is the subject's birth-right, and not a thing to be sold on the condition of religious conformity or political time-serving. This fact was strongly felt by the commissioners who issued their last report in 1812. Then two archbishops, one bishop, and the provost of the university joined in announcing the great principle, that the government should establish a general plan of education for the lower classes, *keeping clear of all interference with the religious tenets of any, and thereby inducing the whole to receive education as one body under one and the same system, and in the same establishment.* This they regard as of essential importance, and add:—"We venture to express our unanimous opinion that no such plan, however wisely and unexceptionably continued in other respects, can be carried into effectual execution in this country, unless it be explicitly avowed and clearly understood as its leading principle that no attempt shall be made to influence or disturb the peculiar religious tenets of any sect or description of Christians." The government having found some difficulty in establishing a system upon the liberal principle thus emphatically recommended so early as 1812, determined on making an experiment of it by giving a sum of money to a voluntary society then existing in the Liberty, Dublin, and afterwards, from the locality of its offices and model schools, called the Kildare Place Society. It was founded in 1811, and received its first grant—£6,980—in 1814. Its objects were to assist schools with grants, to establish model schools, to publish useful books, to supply school requisites at cost prices, to keep up an annual inspection, and to encourage masters by gratuities. All religious teaching

was utterly excluded, but the Bible, without note or comment, was required to be read as a school-book by the upper classes. This society accomplished much good. It was the first practical step towards a sound and useful education in Ireland. Its school-books alone should entitle it to the lasting gratitude of the country. Several causes combined to produce the opposition which proved fatal to it as a national institution, nearly all, however, being brought into operation by departures from its own principle of religious neutrality. The general committee or ruling body was rather exclusive in its composition. In 1825 it consisted of twenty-one Episcopalians, four Quakers, two Presbyterians, and only two Roman Catholics. It was rendered obnoxious by its aiding the schools of the two proselyting societies we have referred to, which Roman Catholics considered a misapplication of funds to which they were themselves contributors. In many cases local patrons indiscreetly violated their rules by controversial expositions of the Bible in the presence of the Roman Catholic children. Add to these causes the great political excitement which preceded the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill. The opponents of that measure appealed to the success of the Kildare Place schools in protestantising the country, adducing the Catholic Bible readers as a proof that no change was necessary. This brought against the society a torrent of political agitation. The schools were denounced from the altars, and those who did not withdraw their children were, in some instances, refused the sacraments.

In a list of books returned by clergymen to the Commissioners of Education in 1825, as being actually used in schools in their parishes, we find numerous obscene and otherwise objectionable publications. Each scholar brought whatever book he could pick up from pedlars and hawkers, and as they all rehearsed at the top of their voices, at the same time, the hedge-school chorus must have been often not a little after the Babel fashion. One of the commissioners, in 1824, saw in a school in the county of Sligo a child holding a New Testament, sitting between two others, one of whom was supplied with "The Forty Thieves," and the other with "The Pleasant Art of Money Catching;" while another, at a little distance, was perusing the Mutiny Act, and all reading aloud their respective volumes at the same moment! It may be said, perhaps, that this state of things belonged only to some very wild districts of the South and West; but it was far otherwise. In Ulster, where there was a respectable middle class, where the linen trade caused a brisk circulation of money, and where the demands of business made the need of learning greater, we find that the then existing system—or rather no system—did nothing effectual for education; and, judging from the state of the districts still left to the same means, we have not the least reason to expect any material improvement.

This state of things led to the establishment of the national system, described in a former chapter. The Rev. Mr. Goold, in his "History of the Baptist Irish Society," whose schools had been greatly reduced by those of the National Board, bears the following testimony to the efficiency of these institutions:—

"From all that the deputation saw of several of the national schools, they could not but regard them as a means of diffusing light more powerful than any other in existence. We are not of the number who would dissociate religion from national instruction; and this is not done in these institutions. Hundreds of thousands of Roman Catholic children, who would have grown up in entire ignorance of the word of God, are brought to know much important truth by the extracts they use; and the operations of mind in Ireland must be different from those in all other countries if, by knowing a portion of what is found salutary, inquiry is not excited after what remains to be known. A part of the Bible read and understood, will lead to inquiry after other parts of it; so that a vast change in the moral circumstances of the country is, we think, at no great distance. They add that the national schools are noble institutions, which afford as much facility for evangelical instruction as, under the circumstances of the case, could possibly be looked for."

The social effects of popular education, contrasted with the evils of popular ignorance, prove that there is nothing in which our rulers should take a deeper interest, or be more anxious to encourage and support, because nothing tends more to the security of life and property, and to the peace and prosperity of the community. Ignorance is a prolific curse, which exerts a malign influence in every direction. When a nation is ignorant, its rulers will be ignorant, or will be forced to act as if they were, pursuing a policy fraught with misery to the people. It is impossible to read the history of our criminal code without being continually shocked with the ignorance, barbarity, and cruelty of both houses of parliament. When any particular species of crime prevailed, or forced itself upon public attention, they could do nothing better than increase the terrors of the law, by enacting sanguinary punishments, out of all proportion to the guilt of the offenders. This vindictive severity caused humanity to revolt against the law, and to make it odious. This feeling gained ground rapidly, as the benign spirit of Christianity began to pervade the masses through the medium of education, making the great principles of justice and mercy familiar to them, and establishing in the public mind a standard of right, by which the spirit of our laws was judged and condemned. The labours of Romilly and Mackintosh had contributed largely to bring about an altered state of feeling in parliament; while philanthropic individuals in private life, like Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, who devoted themselves to the work of prison reform, materially aided in bringing about the mitigation of our criminal code, which has had such beneficial results. Mrs. Elizabeth Fry visited Newgate two days after the execution of a woman named Fricker, and instead of finding, as she expected, the whole of the criminals awfully affected by what had passed, she found a spirit of pity and lamentation over the sufferer, with such an impression that the punishment exceeded the crime, that it excited a feeling of great displeasure, and even bitterness, not only towards the laws, but towards those that put them into execution; and so far from softening the heart, or leading it from evil, it appeared to harden them, and make them

endeavour to justify their own criminal conduct, as well as that of those who suffered, and even to fortify themselves through unbelief of the truths of religion, or to justify themselves and those who suffered by feeling that they were not what they considered justly done by.

The feeling of humanity that gained ground among the masses powerfully affected the middle classes, by whom mainly all ameliorating agencies were brought to bear upon society; and juries taken from that class very often refused to convict when the punishment of death would have followed their verdict. The consequence was that the state of public feeling produced by the practical inculcation of Christianity, and the diffusion of knowledge through Sunday-schools, day-schools, mechanics' institutions, circulating libraries, and cheap periodicals, compelled our legislature to change its system, despite the obstinate resistance of Lords Eldon and Ellenborough, hardened by a long official familiarity with the destructive operation of legal cruelty. How fearful the amount of that destruction was we may infer from the calculation of Mr. Redgrave, of the Home Office, who stated that had the offences tried in 1841 been tried under the laws of 1831, the eighty capital sentences would have been increased to 2,172; that is, in the course of ten years 2,100 lives would have been sacrificed on the gallows with no other effect than to increase the number of criminals, and to brutalise the populace. But it should be recollected that previous to this period some of the most sanguinary enactments had been repealed; and that even where juries convicted, and judges recorded sentence of death, the sentences were but rarely executed. For example, in three years after 1820 the capital convictions in England and Wales were 3,070, the executions 152, or about 1 in 20. In the three following years the capital convictions were 4,076, the executions 223. In ten years from 1820 the executions were 729. In ten years—from 1831 to 1841—they were only 216. In three years preceding 1830, 22 persons were hanged for horse stealing, 9 for sheep stealing, and 6 for larceny in dwelling-houses. In the following two years which intervened before the abolition of capital punishment, two persons only were executed for these offences. Mr. Redgrave gives the following succinct history of the mitigation of the criminal code during the reigns of George IV. and William IV., in a series of enactments which were extorted from a reluctant legislature by society, humanised through the education of the masses:—In 1826, 1827, and 1828, Sir Robert Peel carried several very important bills for the consolidation and amendment of the criminal laws, but these bills did not abolish capital punishments. That statesman, indeed, made it a matter of boast that he did not constitute any new capital felonies, and pointed out an instance in which he had abated the capital punishment by increasing the sum constituting it a capital offence to steal in a dwelling-house from 40s. to £5, and by widening the technical description of a dwelling. In 1830 Sir Robert Peel brought in his Forgery Bill, and petitions were poured into the house from all quarters against the re-enactment of the severe penalties for this offence. Sir James Mackintosh again took up the subject, and moved that the

capital punishment be struck out from the bill. He was unsuccessful; but in the last stage of the measure Mr. Spring Rice was enabled to defeat the ministry by a majority of 151 to 138, and to remove the sentence of death from the bill. It was, however, restored by the Lords, and the bill, as altered, was suffered to pass the House of Commons at the end of the session. In 1832 two most important bills for abolishing capital punishments were passed. Mr. Ewart, assisted by the government, was able to carry a bill abolishing the punishment of death in cases of horse, sheep, and cattle stealing, and larceny in a dwelling house. He was opposed by Sir R. Peel, and an amendment was made in the Lords, subjecting these

transportation, and in the following year for sacrilege and letter-stealing. This was the state of the criminal law when Lord John Russell brought in bills for its mitigation, founded on the report of a committee which the government had appointed. The little progress which Sir S. Romilly and Sir J. Mackintosh had made in opposition to the governments of their day will be seen by the foregoing sketch, as well as the extensive and salutary changes which followed. Lord John Russell's bills effected an extensive abolition of the sentence of death, and a mitigation of the secondary punishments. He was enabled to abolish capital punishments in all cases but murder, and attempts to murder, where dangerous bodily injuries are



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offences to the fixed penalty of transportation for life. At the same time, ministers brought in a bill for abolishing capital punishment in cases of forgery. The bill was introduced into the Commons by the Attorney-General, and into the House of Lords by the Lord-Chancellor. It passed into a law, but an amendment was made in the House of Lords, under the protest of the Lord Chancellor, excepting the forgery of wills and powers of attorney to transfer stock, which offences were left capital. In 1833 Mr. Leonard carried his bill for abolishing capital punishment for housebreaking, executions for which offence were continued down to 1830. In 1834 Mr. Ewart carried a bill for abolishing capital punishment for returning from

effect; burglary and robbery, when attended with violence or wounds; arson of dwelling-houses, where life is endangered; and six other offences of very rare occurrence. The number of capital convictions in 1829 was 1,385; and in 1834, three years after the extensive abolition of capital punishments, the number was reduced to 480. Only four years have elapsed, says Mr. Redgrave, since the passing of these acts, as to which we as yet know the result; and the "Criminal Tables" reveal their very important operation upon the criminal procedure. These tables show the capital convictions under the existing laws to have been reduced, if we deduct the number of offences committed in 1838, before the passing of the act of that year, to a

number not exceeding that of the executions in a like period up to the end of 1829. The effect on the secondary punishments has been very great. The proportion sentenced to transportation for life was reduced from 1 in 20 to 1 in 86; and the effect of the change in the chief punishments has been visible down to the bottom of the scale.

By means of the classification of offences, which took place for the first time in 1834, it has been possible to ascertain the effects of education upon crime; and the result has been most satisfactory, falsifying the evil prognostications of the enemies of popular instruction, and

instruction that had been imparted to persons committed for trial—distinguishing, 1st. Persons who can neither read nor write. 2ndly. Persons who can read only, or read and write imperfectly. 3rdly. Persons who can read and write well; and, 4thly. Persons who have received instruction beyond the elementary branches of reading and writing. The result of a comparison upon this point, during thirteen years from that date, has been all that the most sanguine friends of popular education could desire, and more than they could have anticipated. Out of 335,429 persons committed, and whose degrees of instruction were ascertained, the uneducated criminals



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proving that, instead of stimulating the faculties merely to give greater development to criminal propensities, and greater ingenuity to offenders, it really operates as an effective restraint; insomuch that crime is confined almost entirely to the uneducated. The classes into which offences are divided are the following:—1st. Offences against the person. 2nd. Offences against property, committed with violence. 3rd. Offences against property committed without violence. 4th. Malicious offences against property. 5th. Forgery, and offences against the currency. 6th. Other offences not included in the above classes.

In 1835 returns were first obtained of the degree of

were more than 90 out of every 100; while only about 1,300 offenders had enjoyed the advantages of instruction beyond the elementary degree, and not 30,000 had advanced beyond the mere art of reading and writing. Then, with regard to females, among the 30,000 that could read and write, there were only about 3,000, or 10 per cent. of the female sex; and among those who had received superior instruction, there were only 53 females accused of crimes, throughout England and Wales, in thirteen years—that is, at the rate of four persons for each year. In the year 1841 not one educated female was committed for trial out of nearly 8,000,000 of the sex then living in this part of the United Kingdom. In the

disturbances which took place in Cheshire, Lancashire, and Staffordshire, as appeared by the trials that were held in 1842, out of 567 persons tried, there were only 73 who could read and write well, and only one person who had received a superior education—a fact full of instruction as to the duty of the state in respect to the education of the people. There is another fact worth mentioning. “In fifteen English counties, with a population of 9,569,064, there were convicted 74 instructed persons, or 1 to every 129,311 inhabitants; while the twenty-five remaining counties of England and the whole of Wales, with a population of 6,342,661, did not among them furnish one conviction of a person who had received more than the mere elements of instruction. It will be remembered as a most interesting fact—one which speaks irresistibly in favour of a general system of education—that not one of the 109 was a female.”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Social Progress (continued)—The Religious Life of England—Mr. Horace Mann's Report on Religious Worship—Expansive Power and Vitality of the Church of England—Denominational Rivalry—Renewed Activity of Dissent; its Effect on the Established Church—Co-operation of the Voluntary Principle—Increase of Places of Worship—Church Extension; its Cost—Religious Societies in connection with the Establishment—The Evangelical Party—Missionary Operations—Nonconformist Communities—The Independents, their Institutions and Missions—The Baptists, their Institutions and Missions—The Wesleyan Methodists, and their Progress—The Centenary—Other Methodist Bodies—The Society of Friends—Unitarians—Moravians—Roman Catholics—Irvingites—Substantial Unity of Protestant Denominations—Societies based on the “Catholic” Principle—Church Accommodation—Number of Sittings required by the Population—Proportion furnished by the Dissenters—Proportion of Attendants in the different Denominations—Proportion of Attendants to Sittings—Numbers who neglect Public Worship—The Working Classes, their Religious Condition—Causes of their Estrangement from our Religious Institutions—Social Distinctions in Church—The Pew System—Free Seats—Proposed Remedies—Evidences of Social Reformation—The Leaders of Religious Progress—Exeter: Hall.

THE report of Mr. Horace Mann on religious worship, in connection with the census of 1851, is one of the most important and remarkable documents ever issued by the government. It differs strikingly from the dry, perfunctory manner in which such statistical reports are generally drawn up. Entering upon the subject heartily, he traces the religious life of England through all its changes and revolutions from the earliest times to the present, presenting the results of extensive inquiry and great labour in an admirably condensed form, investing his *résumé* with the interest which only a sympathetic mind can impart to such details. In writing of each sect, one might suppose that he held its peculiarities and imbibed its spirit, so accurate is his knowledge, and so friendly his tone. But when he speaks of the Established Church, his language is that of a dutiful son towards a venerated mother. Speaking of the principal developments of religious sentiment, apart from the Established Church, at present prevalent amongst us, he says:—“How far some of these and others of a less numerical importance are substantially accordant with the teaching of the Church of England will be seen in the more detailed notices. That church herself—unaltered in her doctrines, discipline, and polity since 1688—demands but a very brief description further, and that chiefly for

the purpose of displaying by what wonderful, almost unparalleled achievements, in the way of self-extension, she has lately proved her inexhaustible vitality.”

One of the strongest arguments against the Established Church, and against religious or educational endowments generally, is their tendency to produce apathy and indifference in the minds of those who benefit by them—to paralyse private exertion and check individual zeal, from the assurance felt that they are not necessary to the support of a cause already sufficiently provided for by the state; and no doubt that would be the case to a great extent, and has been the case, where there was no room for competition or rivalry by other churches and parties. But when there is freedom for the development of dissenting bodies, and the growth of institutions on the voluntary principle, the zeal of established churches also comes forth to supplement and extend its regular agencies, and then the advantages conferred by its endowments come to be more fully appreciated and turned to account. Accordingly, during the last two reigns, the revived activity of Dissenters served to rouse the clergy and laity of the Established Church, leading them to put forth extraordinary exertions in order to meet the growing spiritual destitution arising from the rapid increase of population, for which old parochial arrangements and existing church accommodation were altogether inadequate. The sentiment began to prevail that the relief of spiritual destitution must not be exclusively devolved upon the state, but demanded also the efforts of private zeal and liberality; in other words, the co-operation of the voluntary principle, which of late years has produced astonishing results. In 1831 the number of churches and chapels of the Church of England amounted to 11,825; the number in 1851, as returned to the census officer, was 13,854, exclusive of 223 described as being “not separate buildings,” or as “used also for secular purposes,” thus showing an increase, in the course of twenty years, of more than 2,000 churches. Probably the increase is, in reality, still larger, as it can hardly be expected that the last returns were altogether perfect. The greater portion of this increase is attributable to the self-extending power of the Church—the state not having in the twenty years contributed, in aid of private benefactions, more than £511,385 towards the erection of 386 churches. If we assume the average cost of each new edifice to be about £3,000, the total sum expended in this interval (exclusive of considerable sums devoted to the restoration of old churches) will be £6,087,000. The chief addition has occurred, as was to be expected and desired, in thickly-peopled districts, where the rapid increase of inhabitants has rendered such additional accommodation most essential. Thus, in Cheshire, Lancashire, Middlesex, Surrey, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, the increase of churches has been so much greater than the increase of the population, that the proportion between the accommodation and the number of inhabitants is now considerably more favourable than in 1831. In the ten years between 1821 and 1831 there was an addition of 276 churches; from 1831 to 1841, 667 were added; and such was the zeal for church extension in the ten years ending in 1851, that the increase was nearly 1,200, or more than

100 a year. The whole results of the efforts made in the half-century in the way of church-building, in connection with the Establishment, is given by Mr. Horace Mann thus:—From 1801 to 1831, 500 churches were built, at a total cost of £3,000,000, nearly £2,000,000 of which was the result of private benefactions; from 1831 to 1851 there were 2,029 churches built, at a total cost of £6,000,000, of which only about £500,000 came from public funds, and £5,500,000 consisted of private contributions. Taking the whole fifty years, the whole amount contributed by the members of the Established Church, on the erection of places of worship, was nearly £7,500,000. These prodigious results were in only one department of benevolence. The period on which we have entered is pre-eminently the era of religious societies—of voluntary organisations, extraneous to the regular ecclesiastical system, new outlets opened for the exuberant vitality of the Church. Before the commencement of the present century there were only two societies in existence in connection with the Establishment—the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; but during the present century the urgent wants of different classes, which could not be provided for by regular pastoral ministrations, were met by the establishment of voluntary agencies, such as parochial societies, visiting societies, Scripture readers' societies, tract distributing societies, and the like. The interest felt in the conversion of the heathen, and the periodical appeals made for the support of the Church Missionary Society, especially in connection with the rise and progress of the Evangelical party in the Church, reacted upon the state of religion at home, and produced a very extraordinary revival, which has been progressing steadily ever since. In 1850 the Church of England had, by its separate centralised exertions, been raising £400,000 per annum for religious objects, of which £250,000 was devoted to foreign missions. The Incorporated Society for the Enlargement, Building, and Repairing of Churches and Chapels was founded in 1818; the Metropolitan Churches Fund, the Church Pastoral-Aid Society, and the Society for Promoting the Employment of Additional Curates in Populous Places, in 1836. The Colonial Church and School Society was established in the same year. In 1844 the Church Extension Fund, the Young Men's Society for Aiding Missions at Home and Abroad, and the Church of England Scripture Readers' Society were established. The income of the Church Missionary Society, which during the first ten years of its history did not exceed £1,500 a year, in the course of fifty years reached £120,000; and during that period it had expended £2,500,000, all the result of voluntary contributions. At home, church accommodation is afforded for nearly 5,300,000 persons, in 14,000 churches and chapels. The number of actual attendants on the census Sunday was as follows: morning, 2,541,244; afternoon, 1,890,764; evening, 860,543.

Taking the Nonconformist communities in the order in which they have been given in the census report, we find the statistics of the progress of the Independents, or Congregationalists, to be scarcely less remarkable than those

of the Established Church. The earliest account of the number of Independent congregations refers to 1812. Before that period Independent and Presbyterian congregations were returned together. At that time the number of Independent churches in England and Wales was a little over 1,000. In 1838 the churches had increased to 1,840, and the census of 1851 made the number 3,244, of which 640 were in Wales. These places of worship furnished sittings for 1,063,000 persons. The actual attendance on census Sunday was, morning, 524,612; afternoon, 232,285; evening, 457,162. It will be seen that the morning attendance was about a fourth that of the Established Church, and the evening attendance about half. Among the institutions established and maintained by this body, all on the voluntary principle, during the present century, are the Congregational Union of England and Wales, the London Congregational Chapel Building Society, the Home Missionary Society, the Irish Evangelical Society, and the Colonial Missionary Society. The London Missionary Society, though founded on the open or catholic principle, and aided by other denominations, is mainly supported, and almost exclusively worked, by the Congregational body. This society employs 170 missionaries and 700 native teachers. It had 32 boarding-schools, with 850 scholars; 8 institutions for training, 150 native evangelists, and 15 printing presses. Its annual income at the time of the census exceeded £65,000. At home this body has eight colleges for the education of ministers, of which the three largest were founded since 1816.

Under the general name of Baptist churches there are several sects: the General Baptists, of which there are 90 congregations in England; the New Connexion Baptists, with 179 congregations; 12 congregations of Scotch Baptists; and about 500 undefined Baptist congregations. The great body which bears that name, distinguished as "Particular," or Calvinistic Baptists, have about 2,000 congregations in England and Wales; they have a Baptist Union, a Baptist Building Fund, a Baptist Tract Society, a Bible Translation Society, a Baptist Home Missionary Society, a Baptist Irish Society, and a Foreign Missionary Society, with six colleges for the education of ministers. In 1832 the Calvinistic Baptist churches numbered 926; in 1839 they had increased to 1,126; and at the census of 1851 they had increased to 1,947.

The Wesleyan Methodists are next in number to the members of the Established Church. The progress of this society has been very great since 1820. In that year the number of its ministers was 718, and of its members or communicants in Great Britain, 191,000. In 1830 the numbers were respectively 824 and 248,000; and so rapidly did they increase in the next ten years, that in 1840 the ministers were 1,167, and the members 323,000. The census returns of 1851 show 6,579 chapels belonging to this connexion in England and Wales, containing accommodation for 1,447,580 persons. The number of attendants on the census Sunday was, morning, 492,714; afternoon, 383,964; evening, 667,850. The zeal and activity of this body is shown by the fact that their Foreign Missionary Society numbers 476 missionaries and 108,000 members, with an

income of £105,000 in 1851. This body has an institution for the education of preachers, a Mutual Aid, or Annuity Society, and an Educational Fund. An interesting epoch in the history of the denomination was the celebration of the centenary of its existence in 1839, when the contributions for various connexional objects amounted to £216,000. Among these objects was the purchase of the Centenary Hall and Mission House in Bishopsgate Street, London.

There are other bodies of Methodists that have branched off from time to time, in consequence of internal differences of opinion, among which are the New Connexion Methodists, who had about 300 chapels, 95 preachers, and 16,000 members at the time of the census. The number of their attendance on census Sunday was 37,000 in the morning, and about the same number in the evening. The Primitive Methodists in 1850 had 1,500 chapels, 3,500 rented rooms, 500 travelling preachers, and 105,000 members, including those at foreign stations. They have a missionary society, with an income of £8,000 a year, and various small connexional funds. The Bible Christians, another community of Methodists, have 293 chapels, 61 itinerant ministers, 10,000 members, and an attendance of 15,000 at the morning services in their places of worship. The Wesleyan Methodist Association is of recent origin, arising out of a controversy in 1834 about the establishment of a theological institution for the education of ministers. The number of its itinerant preachers in 1852 was 90; of its members, 19,000; of its chapels, 329; accommodating about 100,000 persons. The attendance on census Sunday morning was 32,000, and in the evening, 40,000.

The Calvinistic Methodists now exist under two distinctive appellations, the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, and the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. The former had 109 chapels, accommodating 38,000 persons, with a Sunday morning attendance of 21,000; the latter had 828 chapels, accommodating 212,000 persons, and their attendance on census morning was about 80,000.

The Society of Friends, whose history is full of interest in connection with the cause of religious liberty and Christian philanthropy, has not made progress of late years. In the year 1800 they possessed 413 meeting-houses, and in 1857 they had but 371. They are generally a wealthy body; they make no proselytes, and many of their younger members join other communions.

The Unitarians, always a most influential body in proportion to their numbers, from the high culture and social position of many of their members, are also generally stationary or retrograding, owing mainly, no doubt, to the difficulties which minds familiar with the Scriptures find in the reception of their peculiar tenets.

The Moravians, or United Brethren, are chiefly distinguished as a missionary body, whose operations are mainly supported by other denominations, especially members of the Church of England.

The Roman Catholics made considerable progress in England during the last two reigns. In 1829 they had 394 chapels, which in 1840 had increased to 463, and in 1852 they reached 600. They had at the same time 11 colleges, 88 religious houses, and 875 priests. Their

chapels at the time of the census furnished accommodation for 186,000, and the number of attendants on the morning of census Sunday was 252,983.

The Catholic and Apostolic Church, founded by the Rev. Edward Irving, had at the time of the census about 30 congregations, comprising nearly 6,000 communicants, and the number is said to be gradually increasing. Mr. Irving, it is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, was the minister of the Scotch Church, Regent Square, London, very eloquent, and very eccentric; and towards the close of 1829 it was asserted that several miraculous gifts of healing and prophecy, and of speaking with strange tongues, were displayed in his congregation. Having been excluded from the Scotch Church, a chapel was erected for him, in 1832, in Newman Street. In the course of a few years other churches were erected in different places. The Apostolic Church was established on the model of the Jewish Tabernacle, with twelve apostles, a new order of prophets, &c. In 1836 they delivered their testimony to the Archbishop of Canterbury, to most of the bishops, and to many ministers in different denominations. They also resolved to deliver their testimony to the king in person, and "to as many privy councillors as could be found, or would receive it." In 1837 a "catholic testimony" was addressed to the patriarchs, bishops, and sovereigns of Christendom, and was subsequently delivered to Cardinal Acton for the Pope, to Prince Metternich for the Emperor of Austria, and to other bishops and kings throughout Europe. It is stated that from 1846 to 1851 this sect has made considerable progress. Their chapels furnish accommodation for 7,000 persons, and their attendance on the census Sunday was about half that number.

Setting aside a few small and insignificant bodies, we find a substantial agreement in doctrine and in sentiment between the various Protestant denominations in England. Varieties of opinion are a necessary consequence of our perfect religious freedom; and, considering the independent and the self-reliant character of the English people, the substantial agreement resulting from the exercise of private judgment in connection with conflicting sectarian interests is very remarkable. Nor has this virtual union been without its practical fruits, which are manifested in the cordial and liberal support of a number of institutions founded on what has been called the "catholic," or undenominational principle. These are the Evangelical Alliance, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the London City Mission, the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, the Jews Society, the Town Missionary and Scripture Readers' Society, the Christian Instruction Society, the British Reformation Society, and several others.

Different opinions have been formed as to the amount of church accommodation required by the population. Dr. Chalmers thought that sittings for sixty-two and a half per cent. would be required; but Mr. Edward Baines more correctly calculated that fifty per cent. would be ample, after deducting young children, aged persons, the sick, persons in charge of houses, and employed on public conveyances, &c. The infants and young children under ten years of age in 1850 were 4,440,000; the sick and infirm, 1,000,000; persons in charge of houses, 3,000,000;

and the persons employed on railways, steamboats, omnibuses, &c., a considerable number, which may be roughly estimated from the fact that those engaged about omnibuses in London on Sunday are not less than 6,000. The deductions from all these classes would amount to 7,500,000; and consequently sittings in religious buildings in England and Wales cannot be required for more than about 10,500,000, or 58 per cent. of the entire community, even if all who could attend were disposed to do so, which is far from being the case. Besides, it must be recollected that there are double, and sometimes treble services in many places of worship; but, unfortunately, the accommodation is not equally distributed: it is often abundant where the population is scanty, and deficient where the population is large—deplorably so in large towns. Now, the total number of sittings furnished by all denominations was 10,212,563, which is only 185,450 short of the number estimated to be sufficient. Nearly half that number are set down as free sittings, but a fourth of those are, from various causes, not available to the class for which they were intended. Mr. Mann calculates that the *accessible* provision made by the Established Church, which is based upon the assumption that it is to instruct the whole nation, is enough for only about 5,250,000 persons, or but 29 per cent. of the inhabitants of England and Wales. To supply all, it would want more than 5,000,000 additional sittings. From a comparative view of the provision furnished by the Church and by Dissenting bodies, it appears that throughout England and Wales, for every 100 sittings provided by the Church of England, Dissenters furnish 93, or very nearly an equal amount. Dissenters most abound in Wales, Monmouthshire, Yorkshire, Cornwall, Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Northumberland, Nottinghamshire, and Bedfordshire, in all which counties their sittings exceed in number those provided by the Established Church, while in Wales and Monmouthshire they were more than double. In all other counties the Establishment has a preponderance, most conspicuous in Herefordshire, Sussex, and Oxfordshire, where the sittings of the Church are more than double those of the Dissenters. During the last half-century it has increased its provision by 24 per cent., but the population has increased at the same time 101 per cent.

It is interesting to ascertain the proportions of the population who actually attend the ministrations of the Established Church and the various Dissenting bodies. The Wesleyan Methodists have 11,007 places of worship, with 2,194,298 sittings; the Independents, 3,244, with 1,067,760 sittings; Baptists, 2,789, with 752,343 sittings. The total number of attendants in all places of worship in England and Wales on the morning, afternoon, and evening of census Sunday, was less than half of what there was accommodation for at the three services together. The Church of England had actually attending its three services more persons than all the other bodies put together—3,773,474, against 3,487,558. But it appears the number of *attendances* performed by the 3,773,474 persons is actually less than the number performed by the 3,487,558; the former having attended 5,292,551 times, while the latter attended 5,603,515 times. Or if we assume that a service on an

average occupies an hour and three quarters, it would seem that 3,773,474 Churchmen devoted 9,261,962 hours to religious worship (or two hours and a half each), while the 3,487,558 Dissenters devoted 9,806,151 hours to a similar duty, or two hours and three quarters each. Taking the whole of the denominations, we find that the average proportion of attendants to sittings varies from 24 to 45 per cent.; the Church of England being 33 per cent., the Independents 38, the Baptists 42, and the Wesleyans 35.

Mr. Horace Mann makes some important reflections upon "the alarming numbers of non-attendants. Even in the least unfavourable aspect of the figures just presented," he says, "and assuming, as no doubt is right, that the 5,288,294 absent every Sunday are not the same individuals, it must be apparent that a sadly formidable portion of the English people are habitual neglecters of the public ordinances of religion. Nor is it difficult to indicate to what particular class of the community this portion in the main belongs. The middle classes have augmented rather than diminished that devotional sentiment and strictness of attention to religious services by which for several centuries they have so eminently been distinguished. With the upper classes, too, the subject of religion has obtained of late a marked degree of notice, and a regular church attendance is now ranked amongst the proprieties of life. It is to satisfy the wants of these two classes that the number of religious structures has of late years so increased. But while the labouring myriads of our country have been multiplying with our multiplied material prosperity, it cannot, it is feared, be stated that a corresponding increase has occurred in the attendance of this class in our religious edifices. More especially in cities and large towns, it is observable how absolutely insignificant a portion of congregations is composed of artisans. They fill, perhaps, in youth our national, British, and Sunday-schools, and there receive the elements of a religious education; but no sooner do they mingle in the active world of labour, subjected to the constant action of opposing influences, than they become as utter strangers to religious ordinances as the people of a heathen country. From whatever cause—in them, or in the manner of their treatment by religious bodies—it is sadly certain that this vast, intelligent, and growingly important section of our countrymen is thoroughly estranged from our religious institutions in their present aspect. Probably, indeed, the prevalence of *infidelity* has been exaggerated, if the word be taken in its popular meaning, as implying some degree of intellectual effort and decision; but no doubt a great extent of negative, inert indifference prevails, the practical effects of which are much the same. There is a sect originated recently adhering to a system called 'Secularism,' the principal tenet being that, as the fact of a future life is, in their view, at all events, susceptible of *some* degree of doubt, while the fact and the necessities of a present life are matters of direct sensation, it is therefore prudent to attend exclusively to the concerns of that existence which is certain and immediate—not wasting energies required for present duties by a preparation for remote and merely possible contingencies. This is the creed which probably with most exactness indicates the faith which virtually,

though not professedly, is entertained by the masses of our working population—by the skilled and unskilled labourer alike, by hosts of minor shop-keepers and Sunday-traders, and by miserable denizens of courts and crowded alleys. They are *unconscious* Secularists, engrossed by the demands, the trials, or the pleasures of the passing hour, and ignorant or careless of a future. These are never or but seldom seen in our religious congregations; and the melancholy fact is thus impressed upon our notice that the classes which are most in need of the restraints and consolations of religion are the classes which are most without them.*

This attitude of our increasing population towards religion and religious institutions being naturally a subject of much anxiety to all earnest Christians, inquiry was directed to ascertain its causes. The first of these that suggested itself is the social distinctions that obtrude themselves in places of worship—the pew system, with its exclusiveness, its rights of property in the house of God, its graduated scale of rents marking the worldly position of the occupants, and the contrast presented by the rich dress of the higher classes. All these circumstances, it is alleged, make the working classes feel their inferiority. This is indicated also by the location of free seats, which are generally in the worst places for seeing or hearing, which seems to show that the managers of our places of worship regulate their congregational arrangements not by the personal worth of the members of their churches, but by their ability to pay. On the other hand, it is alleged, not without reason, that it is quite impossible, by any ecclesiastical arrangements, to level social distinctions—that respectable, well-dressed people will not sit in juxtaposition with working men and women, not always as clean as they should be, or free from what is unpleasant in their manners and habits. Besides, it is said that the latter would be much more comfortable aloof from the middle and upper classes in public assemblies; and that if there were places of worship for the working classes mainly, which they might regard as their own, and in which they might feel at home, they would be induced to attend in large numbers, especially if more attention were paid to them by the clergy, and by their influential neighbours taking a kindly interest in their welfare, and helping them out of their difficulties. The working classes, to a large extent, regard the clergy as hirelings, who would not care for their souls at all if they were not paid for it, and who, even in their zeal, are influenced by self-interest and professional ambition. This feeling towards Christian ministers is nurtured by a pernicious kind of cheap literature, which circulated very largely among the working classes till it was supplanted so extensively by a different class of publications, conveying useful knowledge and healthful entertainment, in connection with the soundest principles in morals and religion. It is only by personal intercourse, unpaid lay agency, and extra official exertions, that such a fatal suspicion of the clergy, and such practical alienation from Christianity in the most intelligent of the working classes, can be overcome. Again, it should be remembered that people who are hard-worked during the

week, keeping long hours, many in the unwholesome atmosphere of factories and ill-ventilated apartments, and being unable, perhaps, to supply themselves and their families with Sunday dresses out of their scanty and hard-earned wages, feel naturally inclined to rest on Sunday mornings, remaining in their own dwellings during the forenoon, and seeking recreation out of doors, or in the public-house, in the afternoon. This would account for much of the non-attendance at public worship, even if the accommodation were inviting, if the mode of conducting the service were animated and interesting, and if the preaching were instructive, practical, and powerful—calculated to stimulate the minds and stir the feelings of the working classes, and adapted to their circumstances. But it is needless to say how extensively and how lamentably these conditions are wanting. Thus, it happens that there are many districts where, although the provision in religious buildings would suffice for barely half those who might attend, yet scarcely more than half of even this inadequate provision is appropriated. "Teeming populations often now surround half empty churches, which would probably remain half empty even if the sittings were all free, while myriads of our labouring population are really as ignorant of Christianity as were the heathen Saxons at Augustine's landing." Nor can it be said that these ignorant masses are inaccessible to Christian instruction, if aggressive efforts were made systematically in the spirit of apostolic Christianity, and if our divine religion were made to assume its real philanthropic aspect, and were accompanied in its teachers by the genial and comprehensive sympathies which distinguished its first preachers.

But although the light of Christianity has not directly penetrated the masses to anything like the extent that is desirable and practicable, it is a fact that its reflected influence has had a vast effect in promoting social reform of every kind. The picture which we have had presented to us of the old roads of England is not a greater contrast to the present state of things, than the picture of manners and morals in the early part of this century, as compared with the present moral condition of society. It is gratifying to observe that the educational and religious agencies which have been at work during the last generation have been very far from being inoperative. The reformatory results, though not all that we could desire, have been immense, and have effected a complete change in the aspect of society, a change as great as the conversion of a rake into a sober and respectable member of the community. The report of the select committee of the House of Commons appointed in 1835 to inquire into the state of education of the people in England and Wales, contains an amount of information concerning the increased and increasing decency of deportment within the present age, which is of the highest value. Among the many witnesses examined was Mr. Francis Place, who for more than half a century had been an attentive observer of the condition and conduct of the working people in London, and, to a considerable extent, throughout the kingdom generally. Scenes and events which he represented as being of common, every-day occurrence when he was an apprentice,

* Census, 1851—"Religious Worship," p. 158.

are such as would be unbearable now, and have wholly ceased. Speaking of the habits of tradesmen and masters, he says, "The conduct of such persons was exceedingly gross as compared with the same class at the present time. Decency was a very different thing from what it is now; their manners were such as scarcely to be credited. I remember, when a boy of ten years of age, being at a party of twenty, entertained at a respectable tradesman's, who kept a good house in the Strand, where songs were sung which cannot now be more than generally described from their obscenity. There were then few rational enjoyments at home; the men were seldom at home in the evening, except there were card-playing and drinking; they spent

"Books were openly sold in the shops of booksellers in leading streets which can only be procured clandestinely now. I have seen the Prayer-book, the racing calendar, and these books, bound alike side by side in very respectable shop-windows in the leading streets. Between Blackfriars and Westminster Hall there were fourteen clubs, at which the amusements were smoking, drinking, swearing, and singing obscene songs. I do not believe there has been a club of the sort for many years past within the same space. There are a few of them still in London, but very few; they are held in very obscure places, and frequented by the very worst of the community. The places of public resort, the tea-gardens, were formerly as notorious as they



ARCHBISHOP SUMNER.

their time in a very useless, and but too generally a very mischievous manner. I made inquiries a few years ago, and found that between Temple Bar and Fleet Market there were many houses in each of which there were more books than all the tradesmen's houses in the street contained when I was a youth. The ballads sung about the streets and the books openly sold cannot be adequately described. I have given you in writing words of some common ballads which you would not think fit to have uttered in this committee. At that time the songs were of the most indecent kind; no one would mention them in any society now: they were publicly sung, and sold in the streets and markets.

were infamous—the 'Dog and Duck,' for instance. I have been there when almost a mere boy, and there seen the flashy women come out to take leave of the thieves at dusk and wish them success. The 'Apollo Gardens' was another of these infamous places. It was opened under the pretence of musical entertainments, and there was the Temple of Flora; it was a long gallery, fitted up in a superb manner, and when lighted was a very fascinating place. Another of these places was the 'Bull-in-Pound,' Spa Fields, frequented by thieves and dissolute people. In Gray's Inn Lane was the 'Blue Lion,' commonly called the 'Blue Cat.' I have seen the landlord of this place come into the long room with a lump of silver in his hand, which he had melted for the

thieves, and paid them for it. There was no disguise about it, it was done openly: there is no such place now. The amusements of the people were all of a gross nature. We hear much talk of the desecration of the Sabbath. At the time I am speaking of, there were scarcely any houses on the eastern side of Tottenham Court Road; there and in the long fields were several large ponds. The amusements here were duck-hunting and badger-baiting. They would throw a cat into the water and set dogs at her. Great cruelty was constantly practised, and the most abominable scenes used to take place. It is almost impossible for a person to believe the atrocities of low life at that time, which were not, as now, confined to the worst paid and most ignorant of the populace. I am not aware of any new vice having sprung up among the people; there has been a decrease of vice in every respect, and a great increase of decency and respectability."

The foregoing passages, which, for the sake of brevity, have been put into the narrative form, are extracted from answers made by Mr. Place, when under examination by the committee. The only liberty that has been taken is the suppression of some of the more revolting circumstances brought forward by Mr. Place, in illustration of his opinion. When asked, "To what do you principally attribute those improvements?" Mr. Place answered "To information! You will find, as the working people get more information, they will get better habits." He added, "Every class above another teaches that below it: the journeyman tradesman is above the common labourer, and manners descend from class to class." The whole of the evidence given by Mr. Place on this occasion is of the deepest interest to all who wish to study with the aim of remedying the moral evils of society by rational, and therefore by practical means. The sobriety which among educated persons has taken place of a contrary habit has in a great degree been adopted by the labouring classes also. It is true, there is still much of intoxication among us, and much of other vices and crimes to which habitual intoxication surely leads the way. Scenes of depravity do not now court the public gaze quite so shamelessly, but the "Apollo Gardens," the "Dog and Duck," and other places of popular resort in those days, have their successors in the casinos, music-halls, and other hotbeds of immorality, which are still tolerated among us. Our seaports are still liable to the old reproach of drunken habits; and the reform has not as yet made any deep impression upon the working people of Scotland. Mr. Alison, the sheriff of Lanarkshire, in his evidence given before the committee on combinations of workmen so recently as 1838, speaking of the habit of intemperance in Scotland, said, "I know opium is used to a certain extent, but I think whisky there supersedes everything. In short, I may mention one fact to the committee, which will illustrate the extent to which the use of whisky is carried. In London the proportion of public-houses to other houses is as one to fifty-six; in Glasgow it is as one to ten: every tenth house in Glasgow is a spirit-shop. I should say, as far as my statistical researches have gone, that the proportion of whisky drunk in Glasgow is twice or thrice as much as in any similar population upon the face of the globe." Being asked whether the proportion of spirit-

shops mentioned was greater than it was fifteen or twenty years ago, Mr. Alison stated that it was considerably increasing; that in 1824 every fourteenth house was a public-house, and that the proportion since, and at different times ascertained, have been one in twelve, one in eleven, and, as already stated, in 1838, one in ten. Mr. Alison gives a deplorable account of the moral condition of the people of Glasgow. He says, "I think that in Glasgow there are 80,000 people (the whole population is 257,000) who have hardly any moral or religious education at all; they have hardly any education in worldly matters, and though they can most of them read and write, they are, practically speaking, uneducated." It would be indeed surprising if, under these circumstances, the population of Glasgow were to exhibit any but the lowest state of morals; and the various particulars given by Mr. Alison of their coarseness and brutality seem to follow as a necessary consequence from the neglect of which they are thus the victims. It is at once a consequence of the comparative sobriety of the age, and a help to its continuance, that great numbers of houses have been opened for the sale of cups of coffee and tea at low prices. It is said that there are from 1,600 to 1,800 of these coffee-houses in the metropolis alone, and that they are established and rapidly increasing all over the country. About thirty years ago there were not above a dozen of those houses to be found in London, and in these the prices charged for the refreshment they afforded were such as to limit to a very few the number of their customers. Some interesting information concerning these establishments was given before the committee of 1840, which was appointed to inquire concerning the operation of the several duties levied on imports, and popularly known as the "Import Duties Committee."

The charge made at these houses for a cup of excellent coffee, with sugar and milk, varies from one penny up to threepence. One house in Gerrard Street, Haymarket, is mentioned, where the charge is three halfpence, and the daily customers average from 1,500 to 1,600 persons of all classes, from hackney-coachmen and porters to the most respectable classes, including many foreigners. The house opens at half-past five in the morning, and closes at half-past ten at night. The inducement to frequent these houses is not confined to the coffee or tea that is provided; but the frequenters are furnished with a variety of newspapers and periodical publications. In the coffee-house just mentioned there are taken forty-three London daily papers (including several copies of the leading journals), seven country papers, six foreign papers, twenty-four monthly magazines, four quarterly reviews, and eleven weekly periodicals. The proprietor of another house stated to the committee that he had paid £400 a year for newspapers, magazines, and binding. He said, "I have upon the average 400 to 450 persons that frequent my house daily; they are mostly lawyers' clerks, and commercial men; some of them are managing clerks; and there are many solicitors, likewise highly respectable gentlemen, who take coffee in the middle of the day in preference to a more stimulating drink. I have often asked myself the question where all that number of persons could possibly have got their refreshments prior to opening my

house. There were taverns in the neighbourhood, but no coffee-house, nor anything that afforded any accommodation of the nature I now give them; and I found that a place of business like mine was so sought for by the public, that shortly after I opened it, I was obliged to increase my premises in every way I could, and at the present moment, besides a great number of newspapers every day, I am compelled to take in the highest class of periodicals. For instance, we have eight or nine quarterly publications, costing from four to six shillings each, and we are constantly asked for every new work that has come out. I find there is an increasing taste for a better class of reading." Another of these parties stated:—"I believe we may trace the teetotal societies, and those societies that advocate temperance for working men, entirely to the establishment of coffee-houses, because a few years ago it used to be almost a matter of ridicule amongst working men to drink coffee; now they are held up to emulate each other. I believe that not one-third of my customers ever go into a public-house at all. I have never heard an indecent expression, and, with two exceptions, have never seen a drunken man in my house."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Social Progress (*continued*)—Leaders of Religious Progress—No Modern Church History—Bishop Bathurst—Dr. Blomfield appointed to Chester—Lady Spencer—State of that Diocese—Bishop Blomfield in Parliament—Dr. Blomfield's translation to London—King's College founded—The Church and the Dissenters—Ecclesiastical Reform—Church Extension—St. Paul's Cathedral—Religious Destitution in the East of London—Mr. Cotton—Reformation in Bethnal Green—Progress of Religious Opinion in Scotland; its Leaders: Dr. Andrew Thomson, Dr. John Brown, Dr. Hugh, Rev. Greville Ewing, Dr. Wardlaw, Dr. Russell, the two Haldanes; Thomas Erskine; Douglas of Cavers—Church and State—The Voluntary Controversy—Dr. Marshall—Dr. Chalmers—Church Extension in Scotland—Church Patronage—Non-Intrusion—The Veto Law—The Auchterarder Case—The Disruption and Establishment of the Free Church—Lectures in London on Church Establishments, by Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Wardlaw, and Dr. McNeile—Improvement of the Bench of Bishops—The two Sumners—The Evangelical Movement—Counter Movement in Oxford—"The Tracts for the Times"—Drs. Pusey and Newman—The Independents: Dr. Fletcher; Dr. Bennett; Dr. Pye Smith; Rev. John Burnet; Rev. Thomas Binney; Dr. Andrew Reed; Dr. Leifchild; Dr. Morrison; Dr. Campbell; John Angell James; Dr. Raffles; Jay of Bath; Dr. M'All of Manchester; Dr. Vaughan; Dr. Harris; Isaac Taylor; John Williams; Moffat; Medhurst; Livingstone—The Baptists: Robert Hall; John Foster, the Essayist; Drs. Marshman and Carey—The Wesleyan Methodists: Dr. Bunting; Richard Watson; Thomas Jackson; Dr. Warren—Religious Leaders in Ireland—Bishop Doyle—The Roman Catholic Controversy—Missionary Societies—English Agencies—Evangelical Revival in the Church: Rev. B. W. Mathias; Rev. Peter Rowe; Rev. Robert Daly; Dr. Singer; Dr. Carlile; Dr. Stuart; Rev. William Cooper; Rev. W. Hawels Cooper; Dr. Urwick; Archbishop Whately.

It is a remarkable fact that there is no such thing extant as a modern Church history. If any one wishes to become acquainted with the progress of religion during the last half-century in the Established Churches of the United Kingdom, or in the various Dissenting bodies, and desires to trace the important movements that have arisen in that time, he will look in vain in any single work, and will have to hunt for the information he requires through innumerable memoirs and magazines. The following sketches of the leaders of religious progress during the century down to the reign of Queen Victoria are necessarily very brief, as

it would take volumes to do justice to characters and events, the records of which must be confined to a few pages. But religion has had so much to do with social progress, and even with the action of political parties, and has so materially affected legislation during the period in question, that a history of England would be incomplete that did not give to the leading ecclesiastical men of the day at least a cursory notice.

In 1823-4 expectant Churchmen were accustomed to amuse themselves by circulating reports that Bishop Bathurst, of Norwich, was dead; but although he was then in his eightieth year, he lived on till 1837, during which period of decrepitude and second childhood, his diocese was reduced to a deplorable condition. Most of the other dioceses were not much better. The bishops slumbered on the bench, the country parsons sported, and their flocks indulged themselves according to their inclinations without much remonstrance from their pastors. Among the Church divines of that day, one of the most conspicuous and respected was Dr. Blomfield, then rector of St. Botolph, and his aristocratic friends were very anxious to see him upon the bench. The opportunity was afforded by the death of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, when Bishop Law was translated from Chester, and Dr. Blomfield received a letter from Lord Liverpool offering him the latter see, which was a very poor one, the income being about £1,400 a year; the episcopal residence was mean, and Chester was then distant a long two days' journey from London. These were objections in the mind of Dr. Blomfield, but they were overcome by the reasoning of his friend Lady Spencer. "Don't be so indiscreet," she wrote, "as to refuse it, because it is a sadly poor one: remember, it is the step which you must tread on to a richer one. All the old twaddles have dropped—young ones don't depart so readily—and I am myself so old that I am impatient to see you seated on that bench, where you will be so admirably placed, and so usefully disposed of. If the metropolitan is translated, which his looks portend, the Bishop of London replaces him; and who so likely as yourself—with all your London knowledge and experience—to be the bishop of this diocese, if you *are* on the bench? But then you must be, or my plan can't take place. Seriously, Lord Spencer and I are all on the tiptoe to hear of your acceptance; for though it may be present ruin, yet it will be *soon* future affluence, and why should you not keep your St. Botolph?" This last hint decided him. He kept the living of Bishopsgate *in commendam*, and he was consecrated Bishop of Chester in June, 1824. His elevation caused general acclamation, and excited among the friends of the Church much hope of a useful career, which was not disappointed; for the amazing progress made by the Church during the subsequent thirty years was constantly identified with the name and exertions of Bishop Blomfield.

Bishop Blomfield set to work in his new sphere with characteristic energy to give efficiency to the Church. "If," says his son, "the clergy could be persuaded or compelled to reside on their livings, or, if non-resident, with a tolerable reason, to provide respectable substitutes, and keep their glebe-houses in habitable repair; if the crying wants of large towns could be supplied by additional churches

and clergymen; if the tone of clerical society could be raised a few degrees; if a stimulus could be given through the Church societies, or by other means, to the education of the poor, and the diffusion of religious knowledge; if this could be done, he would not, indeed, be contented, but would feel that something substantial had been effected. But even in accomplishing this much, he had many difficulties to contend with.* He found discipline sadly relaxed among his clergy, and a deplorable want of spirit in matters connected with religion. He found many of them employed in secular occupations of an engrossing kind, one of them being a postmaster in a large town, another engaged in an extensive agency, and a third mayor of Macclesfield. He found that the clergy regarded fox-hunting as "almost a religion in Cheshire," and when he ordained ministers, he was obliged to extort a promise from them not to engage in that amusement. He met great difficulty in compelling the residence of his clergy; and when some one remarked that his portrait, painted soon after he became a bishop, represented him with a decided frown, he replied, "Yes, that portrait ought to have been dedicated, without permission, to the non-resident clergy of the diocese of Chester." The manners of the time may be judged from the following sketches:—One clergyman having been reproved for irregularities of which his parishioners had complained, answered, "Your lordship, as a classical scholar, knows that lying goes by districts: the Cretans were liars, the Cappadocians were liars; and I can assure you that the inhabitants of — are liars too." Intoxication was the most frequent charge against the clergy. One was so drunk while waiting for a funeral, that he fell into the grave; another was conveyed away from a visitation dinner in a helpless state by the bishop's own servants; and a third replied to a rebuke, saying, "But, my lord, I never was drunk on duty." The bishop set about the work of reform with great earnestness; his efforts were attended with marvellous success, and, as might be expected, his popularity became very great. All sorts of people seemed to contend who should speak most highly of him. The great secret of his popularity was manliness and sincerity in the discharge of his duties; and the only fault his friends could find with him was that he would soon sacrifice his constitution "in working so outrageously with mind and body." As a preacher he was exceedingly popular. He addressed 6,000 persons in Manchester on one occasion, when 1,000 went away unable to obtain admittance.

Bishop Blomfield bore a distinguished part in defending the Church in parliament. "As a public speaker," wrote Bishop Copleston, "he is the best I ever heard, for he is ready, fluent, correct, always addressing himself to the point, never seeking admiration by sarcasm, and ornament, and oratorical flourishes. He always brings out original thoughts bearing well upon the subject; no report can do him justice." His first speech was made in 1825, in reply to Lord Holland's attack upon the Church; and he was so successful, that that nobleman crossed the house, and shook hands with him, predicting his future success as a debater. He opposed Catholic Emancipation with great earnestness;

but having avowed in the House of Lords a change of opinion on the subject, in consequence of better acquaintance with the doctrines of the Roman Catholic church, he was exposed to the attacks of the liberal press. He was charged with deserting the principles of his early patrons, Lords Spencer and Bristol; and it was said that he who had been till lately the model parish priest and the distinguished scholar, now became the servile courtier, the interested hunter after preferment, and the intolerant bigot, "doing his uttermost to serve both the court, the ministers, and the heir presumptive with a forwardness of obsequiousness that distinguishes him even on the bench of bishops." The *Times* denounced him "as an intolerant and meddling priest, seeking to establish a fresh and strong position in the country, by founding a new and inexorable sect, of which he is himself the chief." The bishop, however, showed his liberality by voting for the bill to relieve Dissenters from the compulsory use of the Church service in their marriages, and for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

The death of Archbishop Manners Sutton in July, 1828, gave the desired opportunity of translating Bishop Blomfield from Chester to London. Bishop Howley having been promoted to the metropolitan see, the duke of Wellington conferred London upon the Bishop of Chester. When this fact was publicly announced, an ardent Episcopalian exclaimed to a friend in the street, "Glorious times for the Church! Meeting-houses will go down fifty per cent." One of his first efforts in the new sphere of duty to which he was called was for the establishment of King's College, in order to counteract the influence of the London University, which had been founded in 1827. It was found that the great metropolis was deficient in institutions for the education of the middle and upper classes of society. But Dr. Blomfield considered that the want could not be safely supplied unless religion were an essential part of the education, and unless it were imparted on Church principles. "I hold it," he said, "to be morally impossible to give religious instruction which shall not have a tendency either to promote or to weaken the interests of the Church." The question of Church Reform was very strongly agitated about this time. A society called the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society had been established for the purpose of exposing the abuses of the Church; and the Rev. John Clayton, Independent minister of the Poultry Chapel, London, wrote to Bishop Blomfield, repudiating "the violent and pugnacious procedures which a few vehement partisans now adopted and pursued," and hoped that he and "a large mass of both ministers and their people, in both London and the country, would not be confounded with those whose tempers were their dishonour." The bishop replied that he would not confound the two classes, but he added—"If the more respectable portion of the Dissenters disapprove of the calumnies and invectives against the Established Church which are issued by the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, and Dr. Bennett or Mr. Binney, &c., why do they not disavow them? The public in general suppose these gentlemen to be the acknowledged if not the official organs of the general body of the Dissenters. I am very much afraid that a war is

* "Memoirs of Bishop Blomfield," vol. I., p. 100.

beginning between the Dissenters and the Church, into which the latter will have been driven by measures of which it is impossible that the Christian public should approve; and although I have not the least doubt but that the issue of the conflict would be honourable and advantageous to the Church, I grieve to think that the great gulf between us will be widened by the efforts of the combatants, and that the cause of Christian charity will suffer." The influence the Bishop of London exerted upon the Churchmen of his time may be inferred from two facts. A bishop once observed at the public meeting of a religious society, "When I look round upon this vast city, with its ever increasing population, and consider the almost superhuman efforts which must be required to meet its spiritual needs, my first thought is that I am thankful that I am not Bishop of London. My second," turning to Bishop Blomfield, "is, that I am thankful that you are." The Rev. Sydney Smith, in a letter to Archdeacon Singleton, said:—"When the Church of England is mentioned, it will only mean Charles James of London, who will enjoy a greater power than has ever been possessed by any Churchman since the days of Laud, and will become the Church of England here upon earth."

The first step taken by the government in the way of Church Reform was the appointment of a commission to collect statistics as to the existing revenues and patronage of the Establishment. Of this commission, which was renewed in 1833, and again in 1834, Bishop Blomfield was a member. The result was to prove an enormously unequal distribution of Church property; and so willing was he to make sacrifices in order to mitigate the evil, that he stated to Lord Grey his willingness to give up his sinecure patronage of St. Paul's—amounting altogether to more than £10,000 per annum—for the purpose of endowing new churches in the populous and destitute parts of London. But the great work of Bishop Blomfield was Church extension. He thus describes the state of things which he found in the metropolis:—"I am continually brought in contact, in the discharge of my official duties, with vast masses of my fellow-creatures living without God in the world. I traverse the streets of this crowded city with deep and solemn thoughts of the spiritual condition of its inhabitants. I pass the magnificent church which crowns the metropolis, and is consecrated to the noblest of objects—the glory of God—and I ask myself in what degree it answers that object. I see there a dean and three residentiaries, with incomes amounting in the aggregate to £10,000 or £12,000 a year. I see, too, connected with the cathedral, twenty-nine clergymen whose offices are all but sinecures, with an annual income of about £12,000 at the present moment, and likely to be very much larger after the lapse of a few years. I proceed a mile or two to the east and north-east, and I find myself in the midst of an immense population, in the most wretched state of destitution and neglect—artisans, mechanics, labourers, beggars, thieves—to the number of at least 300,000. I find there are, upon an average, about one church and one clergyman for every 8,000 or 10,000 souls; in some districts a much smaller amount of spiritual provision: in one parish, for instance, only one church and clergyman for 40,000 people. I

naturally look back to the vast endowments of St. Paul's, a part of them drawn from these very districts, and consider whether some portion of them may not be applied to remedy or alleviate these enormous evils. No, I am told; you may not touch St. Paul's. It is an ancient corporation, which must be maintained in its integrity. Not a stall can be spared. The duties performed there are too important to admit of any diminution of those who perform them. One sermon is preached every Sunday by a residentiary, and another by a clergyman appointed by the bishop, and paid by the corporation of London; while the non-residentiaries either preach an occasional sermon on saints' days, or pay a minor canon for preaching it. And yet, if the principle of perfect integrity as to numbers and property is to be maintained, as the opponents of this measure assert, not a farthing must be taken from those splendid endowments, for which so little duty is performed, to furnish spiritual food to some of the thousands of miserable, destitute souls, who are perishing of famine in the neighbourhood of this abundance.

"It is a work of prudence, not less than of charity, to impart to the multitudes who are now scarcely acquainted even with the first principles of Christianity, a knowledge of its duties and consolations, its motives and restraints; and the most hopeful method of effecting this is to send more labourers into the Lord's harvest—to increase the number of churches and clergymen—to bring home to the very doors and hearths of the most ignorant and neglected of the population the ordinances, the solemnities, the decencies, and the charities of our Apostolic Church—to divide the moral wilderness of this vast city into manageable districts, each with its place of worship, its schools, and its local institutions. It is to this work that I earnestly entreat the prompt and liberal assistance of the Christian public. The examples of Glasgow and Manchester, where large sums have already been raised within the last year for a similar object, forbid me to entertain any doubt as to the success of this appeal. If this object be important anywhere, it is surely most important with reference to the metropolis; and I cannot forbear from indulging in a sanguine hope that an effort will be made for its attainment commensurate with the breadth and depth of the evil it is intended to cure. It is an object in which not merely the inhabitants of this great city, but the people of the empire at large are interested; for the influence of the metropolis on all the towns of the kingdom, and upon the springs of the government itself, is every day increasing. My desire and hope is, that—by means of donations much higher in amount than those which are usually given as annual subscriptions, or for temporary objects—a very large fund may forthwith be raised, for the purpose of building or purchasing, and partly endowing at least fifty new churches or chapels in the most populous parts of the metropolis and its suburbs." He suggested that an additional duty of twopence per ton on coals imported into London, while it would be scarcely felt by the consumer, would produce a sum sufficient to provide many additional churches. For endowments, he looked principally to the property of the prebendal stalls in St. Paul's Cathedral, the suppression of which, as they

should become vacant, had already been recommended by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. In a second letter the bishop says: "An earnest appeal is respectfully but confidently made to all the inhabitants of London and its suburbs who possess the means of doing good—but especially to the owners of large property in the metropolis, to the great companies and commercial establishments, to the merchants, bankers, and opulent tradesmen—to lend prompt and effectual aid to the promotion of an object of such paramount importance; and to set an example to the great towns and populous districts of the empire, which

quick succession; there were in 1853 10 parish schools instead of 2, 22 clergymen in the place of 3, 11 parsonages where there had been but 1, 6,000 children in the schools instead of 950, and 10 Scripture readers, 19 pupil teachers, 129 district visitors, and 244 Sunday-school teachers, where these aids had before been quite unknown. When the committee made their "final appeal" in 1853, they could point to the facts that the annual number of baptisms had increased in ten years from 768 to 2,030; that provident funds and other kindred institutions, conducted by the clergy, were receiving from the poor more



REV. DR. CHALMERS.

cannot fail to exert a salutary influence on its religious and moral state."

By the Christian liberality of many benevolent persons, and especially of Mr. Cotton, the first promoter of the work in the east of London, whose name deserves to be mentioned with all honour, the undertaking prospered in the hands of its friends to at least as great an extent as they had hoped. Within a year from the beginning of the movement more than £45,000 had been contributed; and within eleven years the last of the ten proposed churches was consecrated, and Bethnal Green, instead of two churches, possessed twelve, each commemorating in its name one of the apostles of Christ. Other religious means followed in

than £2,000 a-year; and that the character of the population had shown so great an advance, that while the poor-rates had been in 1839 £15,000, they were reduced in 1853 to £1,400, although the population had increased from 70,000 to 90,000. Before the erection of the new churches, Bethnal Green was the resort of the worst characters, and the frequent scene of disgraceful riots. On the spot now occupied by St. Thomas's Church, with its schools and parsonage house, and by the model lodging-houses, which the munificence of Miss Burdett Coutts has erected for the labouring population, were situated the notorious "Nova Scotia Gardens," in which resided the infamous "burkers," May, Bishop, and Williams, who

procured subjects for dissection by secret assassination, and were convicted of the murder of a friendless Italian boy in 1826; after which time the place was known in the neighbourhood as "Burker's Hole." When Mr. Norris, rector of the adjoining parish of South Hackney, sent his curate, the present Archdeacon Sinclair, to preach a charity sermon in the old church of Bethnal Green, soon after serious riots had occurred there, he suggested to him as appropriate texts—"The fear of the Lord is not in this place; they will slay me for my wife's sake," and, "Take heed lest ye be devoured one of another."

accomplished divine, occupied a similar position in point of influence in Glasgow. In the same city, the Rev. Greville Ewing had founded the Independent Church, then new to Scotland. Though the strength of his principles was so great as to lead him to take this separatist course, he was a man of gentle spirit and true piety, and was universally esteemed and beloved by Christians of all denominations. Associated with him was a man not less gentle in spirit, but with intellectual power much more commanding, and of the highest cultivation as a theologian—Dr. Wardlaw, who during his life continued the foremost man among the



REV. W. JAY.

In order to understand fully the state of ecclesiastical affairs in England, it is necessary to trace the progress of religious opinion in Scotland. The Scottish Churches at that time possessed a number of ministers of great power and eminence, each exerting in his own denomination extensive influence. Dr. Andrew Thomson, a mighty spirit, had reached the meridian of his great popularity. Dr. Chalmers was rising fast to the commanding position he so long occupied. In the United Presbyterian Church, the ablest man was Dr. John Brown, of Edinburgh, wielding great influence as a theological professor, and as the pastor of a large congregation in that city. Dr. Hugh, a most

Scotch Congregationalist. Dr. Russell, of Dundee, possessing an intellect of great force, with an energetic temperament, but not nearly so well cultivated, or naturally so refined as that of Dr. Wardlaw, exerted much influence in the important town where he was placed, and contributed his share to the great voluntary controversy which continued for a number of years to agitate the whole Scottish nation, till it issued in the disruption, and in the establishment of the Free Church.

The names of two laymen should here be mentioned—James and Robert Haldane—the chief founders of Scotch independency. They were the sons of Captain James

Haldane, representative of the old Barons of Glenagles, in Perthshire; their mother being sister to Admiral Duncan, Viscount Camperdown. They had both entered the navy, and acquitted themselves so well, that one of them, when only twenty-five years old, had risen to the command of a ship. Thus early distinguished, and having the advantage of high patronage, they had a brilliant career before them. At the peace of 1783 Robert retired from the navy, and having married soon after, settled on his beautiful estate of Airthrey, in the neighbourhood of Stirling, to the improvement of which he devoted himself for several years. His mind seems to have been much excited by the French revolution, and sympathising deeply with the democratic movement, he was disappointed at its results, which had an effect on his mind similar to that produced on the mind of Burke, and led him to inquire anxiously, and think seriously upon the subject of religion. Arriving at a profound conviction of the Divine origin of Christianity, and believing that it was everything or nothing—that if true, it commands and warrants every sacrifice to promote it; and if false, it ought to be honestly rejected, he resolved to consecrate all his energies and all his property to its service. A report of the Baptist Missions which fell into his hands, excited his sympathy towards the heathen population of India. A vast missionary scheme was formed on their behalf. Several missionaries were appointed, under the direction of Dr. Carey, and this staff was supplemented by catechists and schoolmasters, and provided with a printing establishment. The entire expense was undertaken by Mr. Haldane, and in order to supply funds, his fine estate was sold. But the East India Company refused to sanction the scheme, and he relinquished it with the greatest reluctance. Still other schemes of usefulness were open to him, and in connection with his brother—who devoted himself to the ministry, and became an effective preacher—he applied himself with all his might to do the work of home missions in Scotland. At his expense many chapels were hired and many built; pious young men were educated for the ministry, and sent out as missionaries, some through Scotland, and some to Ireland. Robert also visited the Continent, where he remained for three years, defending and expounding the gospel in various cities. James Haldane devoted himself to the missionary work in his own country, itinerating from town to town, and contributing much by his preaching and conversation to rouse the churches from their slumbers and their formality. • He traversed the whole of the country from Solway Frith to the Orkneys, preaching everywhere to large audiences, and encountering violent opposition from the clergy and the magistrates. In all the great measures of Christian philanthropy, in all the movements in favour of religious freedom, religious progress, and social reform, the two Haldanes took a prominent part, organising societies, educating and supporting missionaries, establishing Sunday-schools, and publishing books in defence of the Divine authority of the Scriptures. As a preacher, James Haldane met with the greatest success. He attracted large audiences wherever he went, and there were few towns or even villages of his native country to which his missionary labours did not extend. In churches or halls when accessible, or if not, in the market place,

or an adjoining field, and often in the face of obloquy and derision, as well as in despite of furious threats, he calmly and resolutely persevered in his work. In addition to his itinerant labours, he discharged gratuitously the duties of a pastor to a congregation in Edinburgh, over which he was ordained in 1799, and to which he ministered for fifty years, having rested from his labours in 1851, his brother Robert having died in 1841. They were both Baptists in principle, but they gave no undue prominence to their denominational peculiarities, their zeal being chiefly directed to the promotion of the great fundamental principles of religion. Their lives present one of the most interesting of Christian biographies, which has been written by Mr. Haldane, a London barrister.

Amongst the other Scotch laymen who contributed to the progress of religion at this time was Mr. Thomas Erskine, advocate, author of the essay on "Faith," and "Remarks on the Christian Evidence." The greatest layman in the Established Church of Scotland was the late James Douglas, of Cavers, author of the well-known work on "The Advancement of Society in Knowledge and Religion," works on the "Truths" of religion, the "Errors" of religion, and several others. The writings of such men, with the energetic labours of the Haldanes and their associates, contributed to awaken a general spirit of inquiry among the Scottish people, and the public opinion thus created was soon concentrated with intense force upon the Church and State question. Men began to ask why, with a well endowed Established clergy placed in all the parishes of the land, the people were so neglected that extraneous missionary efforts were required to reclaim them from their ungodliness; and why, when this was done, the Established clergy encountered the good work with such violent and bigoted opposition? The Rev. Dr. Marshal, of Kirken-tulloch, a leading minister of the United Presbyterian Church, in a synodical sermon, denounced the union between Church and State. Up to that time the subject had been little thought of; but so great was the impression produced by this sermon, that converts to the voluntary principle increased rapidly in the United Presbyterian Church, till not one minister remained in that large body by whom it had not been embraced and avowed. This paved the way for the most intense controversy Scotland ever witnessed since the days of John Knox, known as the "voluntary controversy," in which all religious sects and all political parties engaged. Dr. Chalmers and the other leaders in the Established Kirk denied the soundness of the arguments of the voluntaries, and contended that the union of Church and State was in accordance with Scripture, and that if it were not so, they would no longer remain in connection with the Established Church. Shortly after an event occurred which put their sincerity to the test—namely, the celebrated "Auchterarder case," arising out of the intrusion of an unacceptable minister upon a reclaiming congregation.

The proceedings about this case bring into the foreground the most powerful leader of religious and social progress that Scotland produced since the Reformation. Dr. Thomas Chalmers, born in 1780, became a minister of the Established Church, and entered upon his duties in the

Tron Parish, Glasgow, in the year 1815. "A blaze of unparalleled popularity at once broke around him as a preacher." He delivered a course of lectures on the connection between astronomy and Christianity, which were published in 1817; and never before or since was a similar reception given to any volume of sermons. Within one year it ran through nine editions. Soon after this he went to London, and occupied for the first time one or two of the pulpits of the metropolis, where the crowds that followed him were enormous, and the applause loud and universal. "All the world," wrote Wilberforce in his diary, "wild about Dr. Chalmers. Canning, Huskisson, Lords Elgin, Harrowby, &c., present. I was surprised to see how greatly Canning was affected; at times he was quite melted into tears." After continuing about four years minister of the Tron Church, he was removed to the new Church of St. John's, in which he endeavoured to reduce to practice the theory he had promulgated for the suppression of pauperism. In visiting his parish, which contained a population of about 11,000 souls, he discovered that nearly a third of them had relinquished connection with any Christian Church, and that their children were growing up in ignorance and vice. The appalling magnitude of the evil, and the certainty of a speedy growth, at once arrested and engrossed him. "To devise and execute the means of checking and subduing it became henceforth," says the Rev. Dr. Hanna, his biographer, "one of the ruling passions of his life. His grand panacea was to revivify, re-model, and extend the old parochial economy of Scotland. Taking his own parish as a specimen, and gauging by it the spiritual necessities of the city, he did not hesitate to publish it as his conviction that no less than twenty new churches and parishes should immediately be created in Glasgow. All, however, that he could persuade the town council to attempt was to erect a single additional one, to which a parish containing no less than 10,000 souls was attached. This church, built at his suggestion, was offered to him and accepted, in order that he might have free and unimpeded room for carrying out his different parochial plans." The field was sufficiently large. There were 2,000 families, consisting principally of weavers, labourers, factory workers, and other operatives, of which nearly one half belonged to no Christian Church, and the number of uneducated children was countless. He immediately organised an extensive machinery of visitors and teachers, with the view of accomplishing two objects: fully supplying both the spiritual and temporal wants of the population, conquering, at the same time, its ignorance, vice, and pauperism. He succeeded so far in one of those objects that in four years the cost of pauperism was reduced from £1,400 to £280 per annum. At the commencement of his labours in the new parish, St. John's, in 1820, Dr. Chalmers began a series of quarterly publications on the "Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns," devoted to the theoretic illustration of the various schemes of Christian usefulness he was carrying on, thus presenting himself as at once their skilful deviser, their vigorous conductor, their eloquent expounder and advocate. But so much labour was too much for his strength; he got weary of this pastoral toil and drudgery, and longed for literary ease and retirement. During the eight years he had spent in Glas-

gow, seven vacant academic chairs were offered to him; he now accepted one in the university of St. Andrew's, where he remained until his services were transferred to the chair of theology in Edinburgh in 1828. A series of publications bearing upon religious and social progress issued from his pen. He had hitherto taken but little part in the business of the Established Church; but on the death of Dr. Andrew Thomson, who had been long the able leader of the evangelical party, and the dominant spirit in the General Assembly, Dr. Chalmers was called by the Assembly to the post of leader by being placed at the head of a committee appointed to promote the extension of the Church. In this position he was pre-eminently successful. Year after year swelled the fund that his efforts had created, till at last, in 1841, when he resigned his office as convener of the Church Extension Committee, he was able to announce that in seven years upwards of £300,000 had been contributed to this object, and 220 new churches had been built. This great movement on behalf of Church extension was finally checked by another, in which Dr. Chalmers was destined to play a still more conspicuous part. It was one of the most important ecclesiastical movements that occurred in the United Kingdom since the Reformation. The following brief record of the facts is from the pen of Dr. Hanna, son-in-law to Dr. Chalmers:—"In 1834 the General Assembly, after declaring it to be a fundamental principle of the Church that 'no minister shall be intruded into any parish contrary to the will of the congregation,' had enacted that in every instance the dissent of the majority of the male heads of families being communicants, should be a bar to the settlement of a minister. This act, commonly called the 'veto law,' was based upon the old constitutional practice of the 'call,' in which the people invited the minister to undertake the pastoral office, on which invitation alone the spiritual act of ordination was grounded. The Church believed herself to possess the power of determining what kind and amount of popular concurrence was necessary before the pastoral tie was formed by ordination. She had often exercised that power to the effect of setting aside the nominee of the patron. When invited in such instances to interfere, the civil courts had refused, on the ground that the Church was acting within the limits of her acknowledged authority. In other instances, the civil courts had often reviewed the decisions of the Church courts, but only with a view of regulating the title to the benefice. But now the power of the Church to pass such a law as that of the veto was challenged, and the civil courts claimed a right not only to regulate the destination of the benefice, but to control and overrule the decisions of the Church. In the parish of Auchterarder, containing a population of 3,000 souls, only two individuals signed the call, while 287 out of 300 dissented; but in an action raised at the instance of the presentee, the Court of Session decided that his rejection by the Church was illegal. This decision the House of Lords, on appeal to it, confirmed—Lords Brougham and Cottenham, in delivering judgment, stating it expressly to be their opinion that in settling a minister the Church had no legal right to look beyond his qualification as to 'life,

literature, and morals.' In this decision, as involving a forfeiture of the benefice, the Church acquiesced, declaring at the same time her intention, for her own spiritual objects, to interpret for herself the statutes which established her, and announcing her unaltered purpose to protect her congregations from the intrusion of unacceptable ministers. It speedily appeared that she was not to be permitted to carry out these resolutions if the Court of Session could prevent it. The Presbytery of Dunkeld rejected a licentiate presented by the crown to the parish of Lethendy, on the ground of his having been vetoed by the people. The Crown acquiesced, and issued a new presentation. At the instance of its first presentee, the Court of Session interdicted the Presbytery from ordaining the second. The Church ordered the Presbytery to proceed with the ordination. It did so, and was summoned, in consequence, to the bar of the civil courts, solemnly rebuked, and informed that in the next instance of such disregard by the Church of the interdict of the civil courts, imprisonment would be the punishment. In the parish of Marnoch, with a population of 2,800 souls, only one individual signed the call; an overwhelming majority dissented; but, in defiance of the law of the Church, and in obedience to the Court of Session, the Presbytery of Strathbogie, by a majority of seven to three, resolved to proceed to the ordination. To prevent this ordination, the Church suspended the seven ministers who formed the majority. The Court of Session not only annulled that suspension, and prohibited the Church from intimating or executing it, but interdicted all ministers from preaching or administering any of the sacraments within any of the parishes of the seven suspended clergymen. The Church held such interference as a violation of her spiritual independence, and proceeded as if no such sentence of the civil court had been passed. Many of the most distinguished ministers, Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Gordon among the rest, preached in those parishes in the face of interdicts served on them personally. The seven suspended clergymen treated in the same way the supreme ecclesiastical authority, and on the 21st of January, 1841, in opposition to an express order of the General Assembly, consummated the ordination. By the following General Assembly these clergymen were deposed from the office of the ministry. The Court of Session immediately thereafter pronounced the deposition null and void. Other like instances occurred. The collisions between the two supreme courts became frequent and most unseemly; matters were running into inextricable confusion. The Church appealed to the government to interfere. At first the whigs were in power, but they declined to interfere. In 1841 Sir Robert Peel was at the head of a government strong enough to have applied a remedy, and the hopes of the Church were excited. Still, no measure was introduced. Under the guidance of Dr. Chalmers the Church pursued her course with steady, unfaltering steps; but she was not prepared to prolong the controversy indefinitely. Denying the right of the Court of Session to act as it had done, she freely conceded to the legislature the right of determining on what terms she held her temporalities; and if, fairly appealed to, the legislature declared that she held

them on condition of rendering such obedience to the civil courts as they now required, she felt that she had no alternative but either to renounce her own principles or relinquish the temporalities. At a solemn convocation held in November, 1842, a large number of ministers signed and published a declaration that if no measures of relief were granted they would resign their livings. Up to the last, however, it was not believed that any very extensive secession would take place. In January, 1843, the government not only refused to grant the protection the Church required, but put a final and peremptory negative on her claims of spiritual independence; and, in March, the House of Commons did the same by a large majority; the Scotch members, however, voting in the proportion of more than two to one in her favour. The controversy was now closed, and it remained only for those clergymen, who felt that they could not with a good conscience submit to the civil restraint imposed upon the Church, to adopt the only expedient now left to them, and retire from the Establishment. On the 18th of May, 1843, 470 clergymen withdrew from the General Assembly, and constituted themselves into the Free Church of Scotland, electing Dr. Chalmers as their first moderator."

The interest of this great contest in Scotland was greatly influenced by the attacks made upon the English and Irish establishments, and the contest was for a time transferred from Scotland to London. Here a Church Defence Association had been established, and its conductors invited Dr. Chalmers to London to deliver his celebrated lectures on Church establishments, which were attended by large numbers of the most influential people of the time—peers, members of parliament, bishops, clergymen, men of letters, and lawyers. Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, the greatest of the champions of voluntarism, was invited to London by the English Dissenters and their Church sympathisers to answer Dr. Chalmers, which he did; both advocates exciting, as a matter of course, the intense admiration of their respective parties. About the same time the Church of England was enabled to rejoice in a champion of her own, Dr. Hugh M'Neile, of Liverpool, a native of the north of Ireland, who, though not equal to Dr. Chalmers in his wonderful affluence of ideas and of language, was superior in the graces of manner and delivery. Dr. M'Neile was also invited to London to deliver a course of lectures on Church establishments. Other able and eloquent men adorned the sacred order of the clergy about the same time, and it was then that a marked improvement began in the bench of bishops. The Bishop of London was ably and zealously seconded in the work of Church extension and religious reform by the two brothers Sumner, one of whom became Bishop of Chester in 1828, where he successfully carried on the work so well begun by Bishop Blomfield, importing a number of zealous Irish clergymen, ardent disciples of the evangelical school, and fluent in their pulpit ministrations. Bishop Sumner was elevated to the see of Canterbury on the death of Archbishop Howley in 1848, and there, in the highest position of the Church, he continued to exert the same influence in favour of pure and undefiled religion, exercising a gentle rule over his clergy, and acting always in the spirit of moderation. His brother

became bishop of Llandaff in 1826, and the following year he was translated to Winchester, where he succeeded Bishop Tomline, and which dignity he has continued to enjoy, with much benefit to the Church. By the addition of such bishops the episcopal bench was wonderfully improved; and at last, through the appointments of Lord Palmerston, it has attained to a degree of intelligence, earnestness, and efficiency not known for many generations, if ever known since the Reformation.

The evangelical movement in the Church gave rise to a counter movement, which had its origin in Oxford University, and whose supporters were known as the "Tractarian party," from a series of publications, called "Tracts for the Times," written by Oxford divines, advocating patristic theology, and ecclesiastical usages more akin to Romanism than to Protestantism; contending for apostolical succession as necessary to the validity of the sacraments, for baptismal regeneration, and the real presence in the eucharist; condemning the Reformation as a great evil, and claiming for the "Anglican Church" the right to be regarded as the only true orthodox church in these realms. The new system thus developed was also called "Puseyism," from Dr. Pusey, one of the principal writers of the "Tracts for the Times." But the greatest man amongst them was Dr. Newman, whose logical mind could find no solid ground between Protestantism and Romanism—between the authority of the Bible and the authority of the Church; and therefore having ceased to make the Scriptures his sole guide, he passed over to the Church of Rome.

The Independent denomination was adorned during this period by a number of men of great ability as divines and preachers. Dr. Fletcher enjoyed great popularity for many years as minister of Finsbury Chapel, which was a sort of centre of missionary influence. Dr. Bennett occupied a conspicuous position for half a century in the city, his mind continuing fresh and active in a venerable old age. He had been one of the most active spirits in the anti-State-Church movement. Dr. Pye Smith, of Hackney, was one of the most learned divines of the day, universally respected for his writings and his character, notwithstanding the firmness with which he maintained his principles. The Rev. John Burnet, of Camberwell, a strong Dissenter, but a man of genial spirit, and ever ready to advocate a good cause, was one of the ablest platform speakers that ever appeared in Exeter Hall. He never took notes, and seemed scarcely to heed what was going on around him; but so wonderful was his memory, that nothing escaped him—no argument, no point, no expression, in the course of a long debate. Always calm and self-possessed, his speaking was pre-eminently logical, while he had a brilliant fancy, an easy flow of the best and most appropriate language, and an unfailing fund of wit and humour, which for many years rendered him one of the most popular speakers in London. The Rev. Thomas Binney, of the Weigh House Chapel, was not long in the metropolis before he became a power among the Dissenters; but he excelled in the pulpit, not on the platform. Colloquial, and not very graceful in his manner, his close reasoning, massive thoughts, and earnestness of spirit riveted the attention of his crowded congregation. Dr. Bennett, Mr.

Burnet, and Mr. Binney were particularly distinguished for the part they took in the controversy against Church establishments; and zealous Church people often spoke of them bitterly as the "three Bees." Dr. Andrew Reed was one of the most successful and the most highly respected pastors in London for a lengthened period, maintaining his position unimpaired to the last. The same may be said of Dr. Leifchild. Both were models of Christian pastors, and universally respected as Christian gentlemen, centres of influence, and well sustaining the respectability of the denomination of which they were among the chief ornaments. Dr. Morrison, of Chelsea, deserves to be mentioned, not only as an influential pastor, but as the editor for a great many years of the "Evangelical Magazine," in which there was always a friendly word for every good cause, without respect to denominational distinctions.

It is a singular fact that the leading Dissenting ministers in the metropolis at this time were Scotchmen; Dr. Fletcher, Mr. Burnet, Dr. Morrison, and Dr. Campbell belonged to that country. As an energetic, courageous man of progress, and as a man of great capacity for work, and for real achievements in the cause of truth and righteousness, Dr. Campbell undoubtedly deserves to be ranked high among his brethren. His vigorous mind was early disciplined, first at the University of St. Andrews, and then at that of Glasgow, where, also, he attended the Divinity Hall of the Independents, conducted by Mr. Ewing and Dr. Wardlaw. Having been for some time minister at Kilmarnock, in Ayrshire, he came to London in 1828, and assumed the pastorate of Whitfield's celebrated Tabernacle, where he laboured successfully for twenty years. He published an essay on "Jethro; or, Lay Agency," which obtained the first prize of one hundred guineas; he powerfully assailed the Bible-printing monopoly, in conjunction with Dr. Thomson, in 1839, and thus contributed materially to the great reduction in the price of Bibles that has since taken place. He is the author of several useful works, which have had a large circulation. He is also the author of a number of minor publications; but it is chiefly through the magazines and newspapers with which he has been connected, that he has exerted the most extensive influence on the religious community.

In noticing the leaders of religious progress among the Independents, we should not omit the late John Angell James, of Birmingham, whose lengthened career was one of extraordinary usefulness, and whose publications, promotive of practical religion, have made him extensively known in other denominations; nor Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, who maintained a position of great eminence and usefulness for half a century—each of them exerting more actual influence on their brethren in the ministry than an archbishop. The Rev. William Jay, of Bath, was also one of the brightest ornaments of Independency during this period. The late Dr. McAll, of Manchester, removed in the midst of his career, was perhaps the most eloquent preacher and the brightest spirit in the Independent denomination. Dr. Vaughan, of Manchester, president of the Independent College, and founder of "The British Quarterly Review," author of "The Age of Great Cities," and of "Revolu-

tions in English History," has deserved well of the whole Christian community. Dr. Harris, the author of "Mammon," "The Great Teacher," and other works, though belonging to Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, has been generally classed with the Independents. Isaac Taylor, author of "The Natural History of Enthusiasm," and many other valuable works, is the son of an Independent minister. Among distinguished missionaries the Independents had John Williams, Moffat, Medhurst, Morrison, and Livingstone. This body have done a great deal during the last thirty years for the academic education of their ministers. They have built a very fine college at Manchester; they have amalgamated the three colleges in London, namely, Homerton, Highbury, and Coward, as "New College," St. John's Wood. This is regarded as a great event in Congregational history. So, too, was the founding of Spring Hill College at Birmingham.

The Baptist denomination is not so large as the Congregational, and it could not then point to so many men of eminence in the ranks of its ministry, or as contributors to its literature; but it could boast of having the greatest preacher and the greatest essayist of the age, Robert Hall and John Foster. Hall had no rival in the pulpit until Chalmers rose to eminence, and even with him he need not fear comparison. During the fifteen years that he spent at Cambridge, fellows of college were among his constant hearers, captivated with his eloquence. He removed to Leicester in 1806, where he remained nearly twenty years, and where he was eminently useful, and universally beloved. His chapel was twice enlarged to accommodate the increasing crowds who thronged to hear him. He was naturally very much in request to preach missionary and charity sermons in different parts of the kingdom, and in this way his influence was felt throughout the community of all denominations; for he never preached without making the profoundest impression on all who heard him. His "Reflections on the War," his "Sentiments proper for the present Crisis," his "Modern Infidelity," and his "Sermon on the Death of the Princess Charlotte," are well known as amongst the most striking efforts of his public eloquence; but the production of his pen which most tended to promote religious progress, was his admirably reasoned treatise on "Terms of Communion," which exerted a wide influence in liberalising the opinions and practice of his own communion, and could not be read without benefit by the members of any denomination. On the death of Dr. Ryland in 1825, he was invited to Bristol, and parted with his people after a severe struggle, and a scene in which both pastor and people wept aloud. He was then in his sixty-second year, and he survived only six years more, when he fell a victim to a disease which had tortured him all his life, so that it was said by the doctor who made a *post mortem* examination, "that probably no man ever went through more physical suffering than Mr. Hall." He was a fine example of the triumph of the higher powers of mind, exalted by religion, over the infirmities of the body. "The mind of Robert Hall," says Mr. Henry Rogers, "was of that select order which was equally distinguished by power and symmetry; where each single faculty is of imposing dimensions, yet none out of pro-

portion to the rest. His intellect was eminently acute and comprehensive; his imagination prompt, vivid, and affluent; his reasoning severe logic, clothed in the most tasteful rhetoric." It has been well said of his style by a critic in the "Quarterly Review," "that it is constructed after no model; it is more massive than Addison's, more easy and unconstrained than Johnson's, more sober than Burke's." "His singular gift of extemporaneous speech puts the copstone on all his other excellencies as an orator. The general structure of his mind, his robust reasoning faculties, his vigorous though ever ministering imagination, his keen sensibility, and his vehement passions, pointed in the same direction, and fitted him to be a great public speaker."

John Foster is known chiefly by his essays, which are among the most masterly productions of the kind in our language. His essay on "Popular Ignorance" must have powerfully stimulated the minds of those who were engaged in the work of education.

The Baptists had also great men among their missionaries, the principal of whom were Drs. Marshman and Carey. They have not neglected the subject of academic education, as appears by the establishment of their college in Regent's Park.

The history of Wesleyan Methodism was much identified during the last half-century with the career of Dr. Bunting, long the foremost man in the body, venerated by the people generally, and—from his talents, experience, and administrative abilities—exerting a commanding influence in the deliberations of the Conference, and in the conduct of Wesleyan affairs generally. His was a position in which great power and *prestige* are the necessary growth of circumstances—the fruit of incessant application of great ability to the public good. Dr. Bunting was a man of action; but the Wesleyans had also among them a great writer, Richard Watson—a man of masculine mind, well regulated and well cultivated; an accomplished divine, who could expound the truths of religion in a vigorous and polished style. Thomas Jackson was also a distinguished ornament to Wesleyanism, a man of great mental power and moral weight. Dr. Adam Clarke, the well-known commentator, need not be mentioned here, as, though he did not die till 1832, he did little during the period embraced in this volume. The vast increase of Wesleyan places of worship, and of Wesleyan ministers, notwithstanding large secessions, shows how active and effective must have been the ministrations of that body to make such progress. The two chief events which affected the body during the period were—the secession in 1834, when Dr. Warren and his followers, called "Warrenites," separated from the Conference, and the last secession, when 100,000 broke off, forming a new community. All the seceding bodies—the Kilhamites, or New Connexion Methodists; the Bible Christians, or Bryanites; the Wesleyan Methodist Association, formed in 1835; and last, the Wesleyan Methodist Reformers—have separated on the alleged ground of the tyrannical powers exercised by the Conference, and the exclusion of the laity from their due share in the management of the body.

Passing over to Ireland, we find that religion has there made astonishing progress since the reign of George III.,

though, in consequence of the constant current of emigration, we have not the same means of measuring it statistically as in this country. The agitation in favour of Catholic Emancipation, and the action of the Catholic Association, had the effect of rousing the Protestants from their apathy, and kindling a sort of polemical war between the parties, provoked by the late Dr. Doyle, Mr. O'Connell, and a number of the lay agitators. Contemporaneous with this was the diffusion of a missionary spirit among Church people, owing to the exertions of the Irish Evangelical Society, the London Hibernian Society, and other English

and directing the currents of religious progress in Ireland since the reign of George III. The first of these is the Rev. B. W. Mathias, minister of the Bethesda, a proprietary church in Dublin, in which "the gospel" was first regularly preached, in the evangelical sense of the term. Mr Mathias was the first secretary of the Hibernian Bible Society. As a preacher he was eloquent, with a style distinguished by simplicity and pathos. The Rev. Peter Roe, of Kilkenny, was another of the pioneers of evangelism, who exerted great influence in his day. As a speaker he was weighty, instructive, and impressive. The



MR. FARADAY.

agencies. At the same time Dr. Singer, one of the Fellows of Trinity College, and professor of divinity, the late Rev. Cæsar Otway, and a few other ministers, began to gather around them a number of young clergymen and divinity students, who formed the nucleus of the evangelical party, which has since spread so as to become almost commensurate with the Irish Church. The following is a very brief sketch of the leading men who—either by labour in the pulpit, or on the platform, or in the committees of religious societies, or by their property and influence—were mainly instrumental in awakening the spirit of revival,

Rev. Robert Daly, now Bishop of Cashel, influential from his position as rector of Powerscourt, was energetic, active, and a clever controversialist. The most effective of this small band was Dr. Singer, F.T.C.D., now Bishop of Meath, who brought learning, taste, and eloquence to the defence of the gospel and the promotion of the evangelical cause. The Rev. J. Carlile, D.D., one of the ministers of the Scotch Church, laboured indefatigably, as secretary to the Bible Society and otherwise, in furtherance of Protestant views, and contributed more to its success by his clear head and business habits than others by their

oratory. Another Presbyterian minister, of more varied accomplishments, the Rev. David Stuart, D.D., distinguished as a Hebrew scholar, a Biblical critic, and an accomplished divine, was also an eloquent preacher, and was perhaps the most successful man of his day in Dublin, both as a platform speaker and a man of business on committees.

With these were associated three men of mark belonging to the Independent denomination—the two Coopers, father and son, and Dr. Urwick. The Rev. William Cooper was an Englishman, of great eloquence and vast controversial powers, who was settled in Dublin as minister of Plunket Street congregation, and who delivered powerful lectures against Romanism. His son, the Rev. W. Haweis Cooper, was one of the most eloquent and accomplished preachers of his day, and was also an excellent scholar. He was always ready and effective as a platform speaker. Besides being the pastor of a congregation, he presided for many years over the Manor Street Academy, for the education of young men for the ministry, in connection with the Independent body. Dr. Urwick had been sent over to Ireland by the Irish Evangelical Society; and being stationed in Sligo he won great fame by a controversy with two Romish priests in Easkey Chapel. Soon after he was invited to Dublin, and became minister of York Street Chapel, where he has laboured ever since. Dr. Urwick has maintained a very high character for learning and ability. He has a very great command of language, an impressive delivery, and a voice whose extraordinary power excites astonishment from the fact that he is remarkably small in stature; but people felt in his case that mind was the measure of the man; for no minister of his time, however commanding his personal appearance, was distinguished by greater dignity of bearing, or was more respected. He was associated with Mr. W. H. Cooper as Professor of Theology in the Independent College, and is the author of several able works.

These were the men on whom chiefly devolved the responsibility of working the various religious societies, which held their "April Meetings" in the Rotunda, the Exeter Hall of Dublin. They were assisted by a number of pious and benevolent laymen, amongst whom may be mentioned Mr. P. Amelius Singer, Mr. Arthur Guinness, Mr. W. C. Hogan, Mr. Thomas Parnell, and Mr. Lefroy—now chief justice of the Queen's Bench—and others. Among the clergy who came from the provinces to speak at the anniversaries were the Rev. Mr. Pope, the great controversialist, and one of the most eloquent men of his time, Archdeacon Pakenham, the Rev. George Hamilton, and the Rev. Henry Irwin, subsequently minister of Sandford Church and archdeacon of Emly, a man of great earnestness of character, deep piety, and heart-stirring eloquence. Among the prelates Dr. Trench, the Archbishop of Tuam, patronised some of the societies by taking the chair at their meetings. Viscount Lorton and the Earl of Rothen also frequently presided, and contributed to make religion fashionable. The late Mr. James Digges La Touche, the banker, acted as treasurer, and was liberal in his support. The late Archbishop Magee was not unfriendly, though he took no part in the meet-

ings. His successor, Archbishop Whately, was for a number of years not on the best terms with his clergy generally, who were nearly all tories, were very hot in their antagonism to Popery, and had a great aversion to the liberalism of their new diocesan, who patronised the system of mixed education, and advocated reform in Church and State. His having become one of the Commissioners of National Education, of which he was the ablest defender, did not tend to conciliate his clergy. There is no doubt, however, that his charges and other productions, uniformly distinguished by close reasoning and apt illustration, contributed largely to the advancement of what are termed liberal opinions in that country: for he was unquestionably one of the greatest thinkers of the age, and of transcendent intellectual powers.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

National Progress—Science and Art—Practical Tendencies of Modern Science—Mathematics—Astronomy—Sir William Herschel, Lord Rosse, Arago, Sir David Brewster—Light—Sir John Herschel, Sir William R. Hamilton, Dr. Lloyd, McCullagh, Mrs. Somerville, Daguerre, Mr. Fox Talbot—Photographic Art—Stereoscope—Wheatstone—Photographic Portraits—Heat—Cavendish, Dalton, Sir Humphry Davy, Major-General Sabine, Sir J. C. Rosse—Points of Contact between Science and the Mechanical Arts—R. Stephenson—Tubular Bridges—Sir Marc Brunel—The Thames Tunnel—Calculating Machines—Mr. Babbage—The British Association for the Advancement of Science—Lord Brougham on Cheap Science—The Fine Arts—Architecture—Soane—The Freemason's Hall—Barry—The Palace of Westminster—Pugin; his Principal Works—Revival of Gothic Architecture—Painting—Cognoscenti—The National Gallery—The Elgin Marbles—Turner—Lawrence, Wilkie, Haydon—Sculpture—Government Patronage of Art—Academies and Exhibitions—Art Collections—Civilising Influence of the Fine Arts—Historians: Sir James Mackintosh, Dr. Lingard, Henry Hallam, Napier—Despatches of the Duke of Wellington—Thomas Moore—Lockhart—Jurisprudence of Political Economy; Mill, Bowring, Burton, Wheatly, Sadler, and Senior—Miscellaneous Writers—De Quincy, Hazlitt, William Howitt, J. C. Loudon—Serial Works: "Constable's Miscellany," "The Family Library," "Sacred Classics;" "Edinburgh Cabinet Library," "The Library of Entertaining Knowledge," "The Useful Knowledge Society," "Chambers's Journal," "The Penny Magazine," "The Penny Cyclopædia"—Quarterly Reviews and Monthly Magazines—Periodical Literature—Poetry, and Fiction: Lady Blessington, Lady Morgan, Mrs. Hemans, Miss Landon, Mrs. Norton, Mrs. Southey, Elizabeth Barrett, Mrs. Howitt, Robert Pollok, John Wilson—Dramatic Writers: Sheridan Knowles, Bulwer Lytton, Mr. Justice Talfourd—Prose Fictions—Statistics of Novels in the British Museum—Literary Women—Manners and Customs—Costume and Fashions in the Reign of George IV.—Good Society—Almack's—Introduction of Trousers and Black Ties—New Dances—Habits of Society—Dinners—Drinking Habits—Hyde Park—Dandies and their Dress—Changes of Fashion—Gentlemen's Dresses—Ladies' Dresses in the Reign of George IV.—Revolution of Fashion in the Reign of William IV.

In tracing the progress of science during the past half century, we find that it has become more and more practical in its tendencies, has dwelt less upon abstract theories and speculations, and has drawn more largely upon experiment as a means of arriving at truth, and of employing it when discovered for purposes of utility. This practical turn was given to speculative minds chiefly by the example of Newton, whose unparalleled sagacity and genius brought to a speedy and dazzling climax the preparatory labours of one hundred and fifty years. The same tendency has caused the knowledge acquired to be applied with more freedom and boldness to the exigencies of mankind, and to the further investigation of the secrets of nature. "If,"

says Professor James Forbes, "we compare the now extensive subjects of heat, electricity, and magnetism, with the mere rudiments of these sciences as understood in 1750, or if we think of the astonishing revival of physical and experimental optics (which had well nigh slumbered for more than a century, during the too short lives of Young and Fresnel), we shall be disposed to admit the former part of the statement; and when we recollect that the same period has given birth to the steam-engine of Watt, with its application to shipping and railways; to the gigantic telescopes of Herschel and Lord Rosse, wonderful as works of art as well as instruments of sublime discovery; to the electric telegraph, and to the tubular bridge, we shall be ready to grant the last part of the proposition, that science and art have been more indissolubly united than at any previous period." Of the great discoverers of the former period, several survived and continued their efficient labours during no small portion of the latter, and a few happily still remain to claim the respect and veneration of their disciples and successors; but the vast steps so recently made in optics, in electricity, in magnetism, in the doctrine of heat, and in chemical principles, tended of necessity to call forth such an amount of laborious detail in the defining and connecting of facts and laws, and the deductions of the theories started to explain them, as seemed to render fresh and striking originality somewhat hopeless; whilst they occasioned a vast amount of useful employment to minds of every order of talent. The undulatory theory of light, developed by the massive labours of Young and Fresnel, has afforded still unexhausted material to the mathematician on the one hand, and to the experimentalist on the other; and ably have they fulfilled the double task, adding at the same time discoveries, whose importance and difficulty would have made them still more prominent had they not been the legitimate consequences of a still greater discovery already in our possession. Nearly the same might have been said for the sciences of electricity, electro-magnetism, electro-chemistry, had not the comparative newness of the whole doctrine of these sciences, the suddenness of their first rise, and perhaps still more the appearance of a philosopher of the very highest merit, Mr. Faraday—who fortunately attached himself to this special department—made the last thirty years an almost unbroken period of discovery. Radiant heat, too, has been successfully advanced by labours, comparable perhaps to those which marked its first rise as a science: and some other topics connected with heat have risen into great and practical consequence. Astronomy has been prosecuted with a systematic assiduity and a success, especially at the British and Russian national observatories, which have been exceeded at no former period; whilst physical astronomy has been cultivated by methods of still improved analysis, and has achieved what is admitted to be one of the most brilliant discoveries of the present century. This was the prediction, simultaneously by an English and a French astronomer, of the position in space of the planet Neptune, whose existence was unknown except by the disturbance which it produced in the movements of the planet Uranus. Terrestrial magnetism has for the first time aspired to the rank of an exact science. In an illustrious

philosopher of Germany it has found its Kepler; and the combination of national efforts in collecting reliable data from the remotest corners of the globe, is characteristic of the practical energy of the age. Chemistry has been cultivated with extraordinary assiduity; but none of the many discoveries in that science is comparable in importance to that which was made by Dalton. To cite, then, at present but a few names, amongst the most conspicuous benefactors of science of the last or contemporary period are—Airy, Cauchy, Hamilton, and McCullagh; Faraday, Melloni, and Gauss; Sir John Herschel, M. Struve, and Lord Rosse; Plana, Poisson, Leverrier, and Adams; Mitscherlich, Liebig, and Dumas.

Until the commencement of the present century, the state of mathematical science was very low in England, and was regarded on the Continent with the greatest contempt. The commencement of a better era originated with Woodhouse at Cambridge and Playfair in Edinburgh, by both of whom the Continental methods were introduced into the studies of their respective universities; whilst Ivory, a native of Scotland, earned for himself, by his writings, a place in the list of great living mathematicians. About 1820 the translation of *La Croix's* "Differential Calculus," superintended by Sir John Herschel and Dean Peacock, came into use as a university text-book. Soon after, the writings of *La Place* and *Poisson*, as well as other Continental mathematicians, were generally read in our universities; and a few men of active and daring minds, chiefly of the Cambridge school, such as Mr. Airy and Sir John Lubbock, grappled with the outstanding difficulties of physical astronomy; whilst a larger number applied themselves to the most difficult parts of pure analysis, and acquired great dexterity in its use, in the solution of geometrical and mechanical problems. Such, for example, were Mr. Babbage, Mr. A. De Morgan, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Green; and in the first rank of such mathematicians stood Sir William R. Hamilton and Mr. McCullagh of Dublin. No new calculus, or great general method in analysis, has resulted from these persevering labours, whether from British or foreign mathematicians; but an increased facility and power in applying the existing resources of mathematics to the solution of large classes of problems previously intractable, or resolved only indirectly, or by approximation, has been obtained. Every year and every civilised community contributed to these real improvements. An almost new branch of abstract science (faintly shadowed by Leibnitz) came into existence at this time—the separation of symbols of *operation* from symbols of *quantity*, and the universal employment of the former. Sir John Herschel and the late Mr. Gregory were among the most active introducers of this improvement in algebra; but few of the more eminent living British or foreign mathematicians have failed to contribute their share to the metaphysical department of analysis. Sir John F. W. Herschel, son of Sir William Herschel, conversant with almost every branch of science, devoted himself with remarkable success to the cultivation of sidereal astronomy, bearing a name honoured and revered by all. Science owes much to Sir William Herschel and his son: Sir William was one of those who

may be said to have created physical astronomy. He was born at Hanover in 1738. His father being a musician, with limited means and a large family, he was under the necessity of devoting the first portion of his life to the musical profession; but this did not prevent him from indulging his predilections for the study of philosophy. Desiring more favourable opportunities for advancing in the path of knowledge, and hoping to find them in England, he left Hanover in 1757; but when he arrived in this country he had to struggle with great difficulties at first, and was dependent on his skill in music for a means of support. Having obtained a situation, however, as organist, he was enabled to purchase a few mathematical works; and he soon devoted himself to astronomy with all the ardour of a passion. He was not able to procure a telescope, on account of his limited means; but he determined to construct one, and succeeded. With it he saw Saturn's ring and the satellites of Jupiter; and, seven years after, Uranus, a planet situated beyond what had been, up to that time, considered as the limits of the universe. This turned the eyes of all Europe towards him. George III. bestowed on him a pension and a residence, where, in his observatory, he continued his astronomical researches with great success. He was now loaded with honours, and the most celebrated scientific bodies eagerly enrolled him among their members; and he persevered in his valuable researches until his death, in 1822. He was succeeded in his labours by his son, John Frederick William; who was worthy to inherit a name on which he reflected additional lustre. England could claim the father only by adoption: she calls the son hers by birth. The latter evinced very early a taste for mathematics, but did not devote himself to astronomy until after his father's death. He then gave himself up to it without reserve; and the value of his laborious observations was recognised, not only here, but on the Continent. At that period the Southern Hemisphere was to astronomers little more than an unknown region. For the purpose of exploring it, he visited the Cape of Good Hope, where, making use of his father's method, he continued his observations for more than four years, examining with great care, among other things, the nebulae and double stars. On his return to Europe, he gave the results of his labours to the world in a work of great interest, and of the highest importance; and the value of the services he had rendered to science was recognised, not only by the scientific world, but by his sovereign also, who created him a baronet, and he was appointed Master of the Mint. After this period he took no further part in practical astronomy, but he published many excellent works, not only on that subject, but on science generally; and he has shown a thorough acquaintance with natural history, the *belles lettres*, and the fine arts—branches which have apparently but little connection with his favourite studies.

It is a remarkable circumstance that as the reflecting telescope was of British invention, so the more important improvements and applications of it have been almost confined to the United Kingdom. It is also worthy of notice that its manufacture has prospered more in the hands of amateurs than of regular opticians. Sir William Herschel

appeared at one time to have brought the invention to its highest perfection, but the earl of Rosse has made an important step further, not only by constructing a larger telescope, but by adapting machinery driven by steam-power to the grinding and polishing of the mirrors; so that the largest speculum may be finished with nearly the same accuracy and expedition as the smallest. The *chef-d'œuvre* of Lord Rosse is a telescope of six feet aperture, and 53 or 54 feet of focal length. It was completed in the latter end of 1844, and erected in his demesne at Parsonstown, King's County, Ireland. It is the largest telescope ever constructed. The machinery is supported on massive walls, and, notwithstanding its great weight and size, it is moved with the utmost ease, and can be lowered to any angle, while it sweeps the horizon, by means of wheels running on a graduated circle. Its cost exceeded £20,000. Lord Rosse's success was the triumph of persevering exertion and mechanical skill. His assistants were his own countrymen, instructed by himself in his own workshops, where the very steam-engine which drives the polisher was fabricated. His labours to improve the telescope commenced about 1828, and continued unremittingly until 1844. "Commencing with a variety of ingenious attempts to correct spherical aberration, and to overcome the extreme difficulty of procuring and manufacturing large castings of so excessively brittle a material as speculum metal, they terminated in the rejection of all minor helps and expedients, and in the fortunate completion, at a single casting, of immense mirrors, which were of a correctly parabolic figure when ground and polished. The speculum of his large telescope, weighing four tons, and having a surface considerably more than twice as large as that of Sir William Herschel's forty-feet instrument, was polished in six hours. Many difficulties in detail were met in the mounting and use of so gigantic a mass, particularly on account of the distortion of the mirror by flexure; but these were gradually overcome, and he was amply rewarded for his efforts by the success of his observations. Many nebulae which resisted the power of former telescopes were 'resolved' into stars by the six-feet speculum. The aspect of a great number of nebulae described by the two Herschels is materially modified, by the power of Lord Rosse's telescope to embrace the fainter prolongations of these singular objects. In general, the regularity of form is very much lessened, and in many cases vanishes altogether. Instead of these, a certain species of symmetry, of a vague yet remarkable description, has been detected. It is a spiral arrangement of the nebulous coils round a centre, resembling somewhat the emanations of revolving fireworks."

M. Arago, who was forty years in charge of the observatory of Paris, was a great astronomer, but he did not, indeed, avail himself of that position to enlarge the domain of his science as much as he might have done; he made, however, some important optical discoveries, and was very instrumental in calling forth the genius of Fresnel, and obtaining a public recognition of the labours of Young. "The undulatory theory of light" stands where it does in no slight degree through the instrumentality of Arago. In 1838 he had indicated the application of Mr. Wheat-

stone's beautiful invention of the revolving mirror, as a means of measuring intervals of time incredibly short, in order to compare the velocity of light in air, and in a corresponding length of water. Arago was regarded as having proved the long-suspected connection between the *aurora borealis* and the freely suspended magnet.

Amongst the foremost of the promoters of science, and the most eloquent of its expounders, is Sir David Brewster, who still survives amongst us as its patriarch. Arrived at manhood at the opening of the present century, having been born in 1781, he has continued his brilliant course during fifty years, pursuing his investigations into the laws of polarisation by crystals, and by the reflection, refraction, and absorption of light, in which he made important discoveries. "His papers," says Professor Forbes, "are so numerous, and their variety so great, as to render an enumeration, even of those containing what may reasonably be termed *discoveries*, impossible within our limits. Few persons have made with their own eyes so vast a number of independent observations; few have ever observed better or recorded their observations more faithfully. His scientific glory is different in kind from that of Young and Fresnel; but the discoverer of the law of polarisation, of biaxial crystals, of optical mineralogy, and of double refraction produced by compression, will always occupy a foremost rank in the intellectual history of the age."

The attention of the British public was forcibly arrested by an able treatise on "Light," contributed by Sir John Herschel, in 1827, to the "Encyclopædia Metropolitana." Its excellent method and lucid explanations attracted to the theory of Young and Fresnel men of science who had been deterred by the fragmentary and abstruse style of the former. This was followed four years later by a most able and precise mathematical exposition of the theory, and its application to optical problems, by Mr. Airy, who afterwards became astronomer royal. The writings of Mr. Airy and of Sir John Herschel have continued to be valuable sources of information on this subject, and on physical optics generally, not only in this country, but on the Continent.

While an impulse was thus given to the mathematical theory of light in the University of Cambridge, a similar progress was being made in the sister University of Dublin, where three of her most eminent professors—Sir William Rowan Hamilton, Dr. Lloyd, and Mr. M'Cullagh—devoted themselves energetically to its improvement and verification. Sir William Hamilton, a geometer of the first order, having undertaken a more complete discussion of the wave surface of Fresnel, to the equation of which he gave a more elegant form, ascertained the exact nature of that surface, and consequently the exact direction of refracted rays in the neighbourhood of the optic axes. The beautiful and unexpected results he obtained were verified by his friend Dr. Lloyd. The names of Sir W. Hamilton and Dr. Lloyd will be handed down to posterity in connection with this discovery. "But," says Professor Forbes, "they have other claims to our respect. The former has generalised the most complicated cases of common geometrical optics, by a peculiar analysis developed in his essays on

'Systems of Rays.' To Dr. Lloyd we are indebted for several interesting experimental papers on optics, for an impartial review of the progress of the science, and for an excellent elementary treatise on the wave theory, which forms by far the most popular introduction to the subject."

Closely associated in his pursuits as in personal friendship with Sir W. Hamilton and Dr. Lloyd was James M'Cullagh, a native of the County Tyrone, who died prematurely by his own hand in 1847, under the pressure of a fit of despondency brought on by excessive application to study, accompanied by neglect and imprudence in regard to his diet and to the laws of health. His unhappy end was greatly lamented, for he was equally beloved for his amiable and exemplary character, and admired for his genius. In the galaxy of illustrious names that shed light upon this age, not the least conspicuous is that of Mary Somerville, who is known in British science, not only as the able commentator of "*La Place's Mécanique Céleste*," but as the author of some ingenious experiments on the magnetising power of the violet ray, and on the permeability of different bodies to the chemical rays, similar to those of Melloni on the heating rays; and she found great and seemingly capricious variations in this respect. The beautiful invention of the stereoscope, one of the most interesting contributions made to the theory of vision, was the work of Mr. Wheatstone, who published an account of it in the "*Philosophical Transactions* of 1838."

In connection with experiments of this class should be mentioned the invention of the daguerreotype, or the production of permanent pictures on plated copper, in 1825, which was brought to perfection in 1839 by Daguerre, whose name it bears. About the same time Mr. W. H. Fox Talbot applied himself to similar experiments, and invented the calotype, or the production of permanent pictures on paper; and by a subsequent invention he obtained what he justly called "an instantaneous process." An image was formed in a camera—a revolving wheel, to which was affixed a printed bill. The room being darkened, and the wheel made to revolve with the speed of 200 revolutions in a second, and being then illuminated by an electric spark, a legible impression of the printing was obtained. We doubt if in the whole history of physics a more astonishing result is recorded. Thus Mr. Fox Talbot, by his rare energy, brought his inventions almost to perfection. Numerous competitors of course appeared on the field, and obtained many interesting results. The talbotype was undoubtedly a great improvement on the daguerreotype process, which, besides requiring extraordinary care in the preparation of the plate, and in the process itself, demanded a costly material; but its great defect was the difficulty, if not impossibility, of rendering a paper surface suitable to the requirements of photography. Hence the use of a film of albumen on glass, by M. Niépce de St. Victor, in 1848, was a step considerably in advance; and still further progress was made by the use of collodion in the same way by M. le Gray, in 1850. By the employment of collodion, the process, from being one of extreme difficulty and uncertainty, became one that could be performed with great ease and certainty. An

extraordinary increase of sensibility also was obtained by the use of this material, and thus the applications of photography were multiplied; and it is scarcely too much to assert that the employment of collodion in photography mainly led to that development of the art which has since taken place. Few, indeed, obtained satisfactory results with the daguerreotype, or even the albumen process; but with the collodion process, any one possessing an ordinary share of manipulative dexterity may obtain at pleasure either positive or negative pictures of great beauty. Many improvements have been introduced since the discovery of

number of persons, enriching many, and diffusing widely through the community a knowledge of public men, and a taste for the fine arts.

But far more important are the wondrous powers evolved from the study of heat. The pioneer in this branch among us was the Hon. Mr. Cavendish, who was born in 1731, and devoted his life to the pursuits of science. He was followed by Dalton, who made several important discoveries in chemistry, particularly with reference to the gases, and in the doctrine of heat. Mr. Dalton has been labouring, says Sir Humphry Davy, for more than a



LORD ROSSE.

the applicability of collodion, but perhaps the most important has for its object the imparting to *dry* collodion some degree of that sensitiveness for which *moist* collodion is so remarkable, and thus making photography more generally useful, by rendering it easier to the traveller, or to the photographer who is obliged to operate at a distance from his studio. From these experiments in light has sprung the art of delineating the human features and all other objects with perfect accuracy, which has added greatly to the happiness of families, and created a great trade in photographic portraits, employing an immense

quarter of a century with the most disinterested views. With the greatest modesty and simplicity of character, he has remained in the obscurity of the country, neither asking for approbation nor offering himself as an object of applause. In 1833, at the age of sixty-seven, he received a pension from government, which he enjoyed till 1844, when he died. His discoveries may be said to have terminated at the age of forty, though he laboured for thirty years after. The conceptive faculty seems to have spent itself in his earlier efforts. His discoveries in connection with heat, electricity, and magnetism, and their practical applications,

in connection with which are those of Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Faraday, Major-General Sabine, and Captain Sir J. C. Rosse, are too familiar to our readers to be dwelt upon here, especially as their full development belongs to a subsequent period.

We shall now note some points of contact between science and the mechanical arts, in the progress of those discoveries and inventions which have so wonderfully increased the power of man in the present age. One of the most important of these is the power of calculating the strength of materials to which we owe the tubular bridge, and with

coal-pits; but after a while he rose to be an engine-man, when his wages became twelve shillings a week, and his ingenuity and attention soon gained him the confidence of his employers. By working extra hours, in repairing the watches and clocks of his neighbours, he managed to give his son Robert the education of which he himself had felt the want; for he derived his knowledge of machinery from observation, and not from books. He turned his attention to the invention of a safety lamp, in which he made considerable progress; but he was outstripped by the superior genius and quickness of Sir H. Davy, who was



SIR DAVID BREWSTER.

which the name of Robert Stephenson is so honourably connected. The comparatively great strength of tubes was a fact known from the time of Galileo, but it was reserved for Mr. Stephenson to bring their application to perfection. The bridge that spans the Menai Strait, which he undertook on his own responsibility, unprecedented for its boldness and novelty, was a most signal triumph of genius, and a memorable proof of the power of faith in the principles of science.

Like the Herschels, the two Stephensons attained almost equal celebrity. George, the father, was born near Newcastle, in 1780. His parents being very poor, he was obliged at an early age to gain a subsistence by working at

occupied on the same subject. Attempts had been made for some time to introduce locomotives generally, but engineers had bewildered themselves in the endeavour to overcome an imaginary difficulty. Without making a trial, they supposed that the adhesion between the wheels and the rails was not sufficient to render propulsion possible, except with the aid of complicated apparatus. Stephenson saw that this supposition had no foundation, and therefore he succeeded where they had failed. Among the many improvements he introduced into the locomotive, increasing the draft, by throwing the waste steam into the chimney, was not the least valuable. He conceived

the idea, also, of a velocity on railways much higher than had before been thought of, and he attained it. In a competition, in 1829, an engine made by him gained the prize; and his success was due, in a great degree, to his application of a principle which was not unknown, but had never before been reduced to practice—the increase of evaporating power in the boiler, by conveying the hot air from the furnace to the smoke-box through a number of tubes. He may be said to have been to the locomotive what Watt was to the fixed engine. He died in 1848. Robert Stephenson, his son, was born in 1803. Notwithstanding the poverty of his parents, he was well educated, thanks to his father's exertions, which were well seconded by his own. Having spent some time in the University of Edinburgh, where he gained a prize in mathematics, he was first placed in his father's factory, and then was sent out to South America, to report on the gold and silver mines of Columbia and Venezuela. On his return he devoted himself to the improvement of locomotives, made various important experiments, and greatly assisted his father in his projects. He subsequently constructed numerous railways, many of which included works of great difficulty, and several of them were on the Continent, where his skill was fully appreciated. He gave to iron bridges a span greater than had ever before been attempted; but his fame mainly rests on his invention of the tubular bridge, though, in carrying out this idea, he had the advantage of very able assistance. Besides those at the Menai Straits, he constructed the tubular bridge over the St. Lawrence, at Montreal, where it is nearly two miles wide. He was elected member of Parliament; and he died in 1859, having, it is said, refused a title, which could, indeed, have added nothing to the brilliancy of that name which he and his father had rendered so celebrated.

Mr. Brunel, another of the heroes of mechanical science, made a great step in advance by the invention of self-acting machinery to supersede the work of artisans, by which a new epoch was created in art. By means of this machinery, not only is it possible to execute, in a comparatively short time, and with a prodigious economy, such objects as blocks and pulleys—which are required in vast numbers, and should be precisely alike—but the accuracy of the manufacture is thereby increased, and works which transcend the power of unaided muscular labour, such as an iron steam cylinder, eight feet or more in diameter, may be readily executed under the direction of a very ordinary workman by means of steam-power and self-acting machinery. He was aided by the Government in starting a manufactory for the construction of tools, for which he received £53,000. In the course of a year 140,000 blocks, on no less than 200 different patterns, were produced, and the number of workmen was diminished in the proportion of about eleven to one. As a reward, Mr. Brunel received £16,000, being two-thirds of the first year's saving—a sufficient proof that he was the *bonâ fide* inventor of this admirable apparatus. Nearly twenty years elapsed before such a splendid example of ingenious economy and artistic precision was generally imitated; yet before his death Sir Marc Brunel saw the fruit of his ingenuity almost indefinitely multiplied in the workshops of

London, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, and Newcastle, and no less highly appreciated and extensively employed abroad. "The more we reflect," says Professor Forbes, "on the comparative state of the arts now and a century ago, the more we shall find reason to estimate highly the introduction of correct and scientific ideas of machinery and tools, for constructing other machines and structures. It was, in fact, the necessary complement of the invention of the steam-engine. Watt contrived the mighty heart which was to give a new impulse to social life; Brunel and others of the same stamp added limbs and muscles, whereby its energies were rendered thoroughly practical." Among these may be mentioned the planing machine, the circular saw, and the mortising machine, and, above all, perhaps, the steam-hammer, which form the staple of the magnificent and varied apparatus with which, driven by the gigantic power of steam, our mechanical factories are now so generally provided, and without which the triumphs of art in which our generation glories—our railroads, our locomotives, our crystal palaces, our tunnels, suspension bridges, and our steam navies—would have been impossible achievements. The greatest effort of Brunel was the Thames Tunnel, a structure of perfect firmness and solidity laid on a quicksand, and forced through a quaking mass of mud, which will endure like the *cloacæ* of regal Rome, when the palace and the cathedral have crumbled to dust. He was enabled to accomplish this prodigious work by means of "the shield"—a movable vertical frame of cast iron, provided with thirty-six cells, in each of which a man was placed with a pick to excavate the area, this frame or shield being moved bodily forwards by powerful screws, while the bricklayers brought up the arched masonry behind, which was then beyond the power of injury. The works, however, were several times "drowned" during their progress by the irruptions of the Thames, but every fresh difficulty was met successfully by the heroic engineer. The tunnel was commenced on the 2nd of March, 1825, and finished on the 25th of March, 1843. Brunel survived the completion of this, his greatest work, above six years, dying on the 12th of December, 1849. He was the chief of a class—the mechanical engineers—since extensively multiplied: and he left a son to be the brightest ornament of the same profession, and to add fresh lustre to his name.

Of a different kind, but perhaps still more wonderful, are the calculating machines of Mr. Babbage. A few years after leaving college, he originated the plan of a machine for calculating tables, by means of successive orders of differences, and having received for it, in 1822 and the following year, the support of the Astronomical and Royal Societies, and a grant of money from Government, he proceeded to its execution. He also in 1834 contrived a machine called the "analytical engine," extending the plan so as to develop algebraic quantities, and to tabulate the numerical value of complicated functions, when one or more of the variables which they contain are made to alter their values; but the difficulties of carrying out this plan became insurmountable.*

* For the materials in the foregoing rapid sketch of the progress of science, the writer is chiefly indebted to the dissertation of Professor Forbes, in the "Encyclopædia Britannica."

The most memorable event connected with the progress of science in the present age, is the establishment of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which held its first annual meeting at York, in 1831. It is an institution of the most comprehensive character, including every department of human knowledge of a scientific nature, and which can be advanced by scientific investigation. It contemplates no interference with the ground occupied by other institutions. Its objects are to give a stronger impulse and a more systematic direction to scientific inquiry—to promote the intercourse of those who cultivate science in different parts of the British Empire with one another, and with foreign philosophers—to obtain a more general attention to the objects of science, and a

moting its objects where the annual meetings are held. So popular did this institution become with the friends of science throughout the United Kingdom, that at the fourth meeting in Edinburgh, in 1834, 1,298 tickets were issued to members. All the public accommodations which that fine capital possessed were opened to it, and its visit constituted a sort of festal season, as it does wherever it holds its meetings. On that occasion, one of the secretaries, Professor Forbes, delivered an address, in which he gave an account of its objects and its progress up to that time. The Lord Chancellor Brougham was present at the meeting, and in seconding a motion for a vote of thanks to M. Arago and other distinguished foreigners who honoured it with their presence, he said that he looked upon this



MR. TURNER.

removal of any disadvantages of a public kind which impede its progress. The association was composed originally of all persons who attended its first meeting, of the fellows and members of chartered, literary, and philosophical societies publishing transactions in the British Empire, of the office-bearers, members of councils, or managing committees of philosophical institutions, or such of their members as they recommended. Persons not belonging to such institutions are elected by the general committee or council. All members pay an annual subscription of £1 in advance, or a life subscription of £5. The association is managed by a general committee, and committees of science for the different sections, aided by local committees, who assist in pro-

as one of the most important and unquestionable of all the benefits it was calculated to bestow, that it brought together men of science from every quarter of the world. As there is no duty more sacred and imperative on the part of governments than to promote by every means that peace which ought to bind the great family of mankind together in all its departments and institutions, so he held that whatever brings men into contact on such neutral ground as science, tends to facilitate the task of rulers, and makes it easy to keep at peace with neighbouring states. The first eight meetings of the association (1831-38) were held at York, Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Dublin, Bristol, Liverpool, and Newcastle.

It would not be right to conclude this brief review of

the progress of science without noticing the laudable efforts made during this period to diffuse it among the people, and we cannot do better than avail ourselves of the address of Lord Brougham, as President of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, in 1858:—"It is quite as great a delusion under which those labour who figure to themselves the promoters of popular literature as indifferent to the encouragement of more severe studies and the cultivation of profounder science. We of the Useful Knowledge Society can well recollect that exactly the same prejudice prevailed—or if it did not, was sought to be raised—against the preparation of scientific works in a cheap form, and designed to give information of the most solid and even profound description. Some of the very persons who were remunerated, and amply remunerated, for their writings, derided what they called *sixpenny science*, because a treatise once a fortnight for several years was published at that price. But by whom composed? By such mathematicians as Professor De Morgan; such natural philosophers as Sir D. Brewster, a discoverer as well as a teacher; and such botanists as Professor Lindley. It was plain enough that some of those who thus complained of the treatises as not profound could not have read one line of them, from their own profound ignorance of the subject. Contemporary with the *Penny Magazine* was the *Penny Cyclopædia*, of which it is enough to say that so accomplished a scholar as Professor Long being the conductor, no less a mathematician than the Astronomer-Royal has published in a separate form his valuable contributions to the work—papers, too, composed in so plain and popular a manner as to bring the most sublime truths of the Newtonian philosophy within the comprehension of readers very moderately acquainted with the mathematics. At the bottom of the clamour against the Useful Knowledge Society's proceedings, possibly not unconnected with the present attacks upon popular literature, was the notion that the gains of authors are lessened, the wages of literary labour reduced—an error not less glaring than that of the common workman who should object to the capital by which his labour is employed and paid being invested at low profits and quick returns. In truth, the fund out of which literary labour is paid has been very greatly increased by the cheap publications. Independently of the *Cyclopædia*, the society did not expend less than £100,000 in this way, the whole arising from the profits of its cheap works, which, by their charter of incorporation, they were bound thus to expend. When Admiral Beaufort (late hydrographer of the Admiralty) was consulted on the price of its maps, one shilling being proposed, he refused to undertake the superintendence of that department if the price were fixed higher than sixpence, because he saw that this must secure circulation and profit. But the duty on paper is a heavy burden, and goes almost altogether in diminution of the fund destined for authors and artists. It amounted to above £7,000 yearly on the *Penny Magazine*, when it was threepence a pound. Had it not been reduced to three-halfpence, the *Cyclopædia* must have been given up; and even since the reduction, one of the greatest publishers pays Government between £7,000

and £8,000 a year, the greatest part of which would be employed in paying for literary labour and plates, were the duty repealed. The exaction of this duty is among the greatest anomalies of our political administration, though it is not the only one; for while endeavouring by every resource of negotiation and of force, not a little costly, to put down the foreign slave-trade, we give it direct encouragement by opening our markets to slave-grown sugar, and thus also lowering the price of our own free-grown produce. So while we profess to promote education, and, indeed, the improvement of people in every way, and expend large sums yearly to further this great work, we raise, on the other hand, a powerful obstruction to all our operations by laying a tax upon knowledge in each one of its various departments."

There is not very much to be said of the progress of the fine arts during the twenty years that comprised the last two reigns. It was a time of transition; the lights of the past age were gradually setting, and those which were to illumine the reign of Victoria, with a few exceptions, had not risen far above the horizon. We shall best describe the progress made during the period under review by brief notices of the most distinguished artists who have adorned it, and of their principal works.

When the Prince Regent ascended the throne, the fine arts were still in a languishing condition, and *diletanteism* characterised the patrons of painters. The court and the nobles, and men of princely fortunes, showered wealth upon their favourites, so that many of our painters and sculptors amassed considerable wealth. The great patrons had, at enormous cost, gathered together collections, which included pictures not to be found elsewhere out of national or royal galleries. The *cognoscenti* had obtained a standing as genuine critics, and had acquired great skill in discerning the productions of the old masters, from the habit of attending sales, and making selections; self-interest and vanity tending to render their judgments quick and keen in these matters. The consequence was that these connoisseurs could lay claim to a degree of critical acumen which we now expect only from a superior artist, whose business it is to understand everything about such matters. Of course, there was much of the empirical spirit about many, who prided themselves on their attainments in this department. Young men who rode post-haste through the Continent, and took a hurried glance at the national galleries, assumed airs of transcendent knowledge, cried up everything foreign, and looked with contempt upon the productions of native artists. But artists began to travel too, and study abroad, and were rewarded by having their *ateliers* crowded with sitters. The fruit of travel soon told upon the rising generation of artists, and revived a spirit which led, in 1823, to the formation of the National Gallery, to which we have already referred as one of the few claims of George IV. to the gratitude of his country. The Elgin marbles, too, which had become national property in 1816, had given a stimulus to art, and extended the taste for its cultivation. They were chiefly derived from the Parthenon, a temple of Minerva, on the Acropolis at Athens, of which they formed part of the frieze and pediment, built by Phidias, about 500 years B.C.

Thomas, Lord Elgin, began the collection of these marbles during his mission to the Ottoman Porte in 1802. They were purchased by the British Government for £35,000, and placed in the British Museum.

Turner has been pronounced as "essentially the great founder of English landscape painting, the greatest poet-artist our nation has yet produced. He excelled in everything—from the mere diagram and topographic map to the most consummate truth and the most refined idealism. In every touch of his there was profound thought and meaning." His work was unrivalled in storms; as Napoleon said of Kleber, "He wakes on the day of battle." The remark of Admiral Bowles, when looking at Turner's "Wreck of the Minataur," conveyed the highest compliment to his art—"No ship could live in such a sea." His "Man Overboard" is a still higher effort of genius, in conveying an expression of horror and utter despair. He was the best illustrator of our national poets. He made known to Englishmen the beauties of their native land, and made them acquainted with the picturesque on the Continent. He gave our young artists love for colour, and made us the Venetians of the modern school. From "Towing an Old War-ship to her last Moorings," to "Wilkie's Burial," and the "Burning of the Houses of Parliament," he let no event of his age pass without record or comment. In the words of one of his enthusiastic biographers, "He exhausted ancient mythology; he illustrated sacred and profane history; and when he had exhausted sun and sea, and earth and air, he made for himself a new world with new elements, and there, alone in that sublime solitude, this great enchanter disported himself, like the mammoth in the world before man came." Born a barber's son, in Covent Garden, before the dawn of English art, he laboured long at the inglorious work of colouring architectural drawings, at very poor remuneration. But his fame increased by degrees, till at last he rivalled the old masters, and could command enormous prices. But wealth made no change in his domestic habits. He remained in sordid obscurity; his habits were penurious; he was branded as a miser, but only by his enemies. He lived the life of a bachelor, and was never known to have any relations. But he was wedded to his art, to which he was a most munificent benefactor. He left the bulk of his property to found almshouses for the benefit of unfortunate and meritorious artists. When he died, in 1851, it was found that he had bequeathed sixty pictures—one of which was worth £5,000—£30,000 worth of sketches and drawings, a matchless store of engravings, and £120,000 in money, to found an asylum for this benevolent purpose; and he left all the rest of his pictures to the nation, on the express condition that a suitable place should be provided for their deposit and exhibition.

The fame of Sir Thomas Lawrence had attained its meridian in this period. In portrait painting, which he made his profession, he was one of the most distinguished artists of the day, and he attained proficiency in it without having gone to Italy or studied the old masters. It has been said of him, as well as of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he painted three generations of beauties. He went to Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, by invitation, to take the likenesses

of the most distinguished statesmen who were there assembled for diplomatic purposes. During his residence on the Continent he was received by the sovereigns of the different countries he visited, and entertained with marked distinction; and the propriety and elegance of his deportment, we are told, made an impression highly favourable to his character. On his return, he found that he had been unanimously elected to succeed Mr. West as president of the Royal Academy, and this office he continued to hold till his death, which took place on the 7th of January, 1830. The distinguishing characteristic of his style was the power of conveying a faithful resemblance, with a singularly delicate sense of beauty and dignity. It was said of him that "no painter who had ever lived seemed to have dived more deeply into individual character, as conveyed by the conformation of the visage and the expression of the features." The late Mr. Turner has been heard to say of him, "He paints eyes better than Titian." Mr. Westmacott observed that his illustrations of Cato, Coriolanus, and Hamlet may be considered historical works, and examples of his creative genius, possessing a vigour of imagination, a propriety of sentiment, a breadth and chasteness of composition worthy to be ranked with the classical and distinguished efforts of the sixteenth century; while his more comprehensive powers were displayed in the admirable picture of "Satan;" all eminent proofs that he possessed talents equal to the accomplishment of the highest designs in art.

Sir David Wilkie, the greatest of modern Scotch painters, claims a few words here, which shall be confined to the latter part of his brilliant career. In 1820-1 he accomplished his masterpiece, "The Chelsea Pensioners listening to the News of Waterloo," for which he received 1,200 guineas from the Duke of Wellington. His subsequent works did not increase his reputation, chiefly because he abandoned the style in which he excelled, and adopted a new one. In 1830 he was made painter in ordinary to His Majesty, on the death of Lawrence, and became a candidate for the presidency of the Royal Academy, but had only one vote recorded in his favour. Between 1830 and 1840 he painted a considerable number of works, among which were "John Knox preaching before Mary," and "The Discovery of the Body of Tippoo Saib," painted for the widow of Sir David Baird, at £1,500. In 1836 he was knighted, and in 1840 he set out on a tour to the East, and went as far as Jerusalem, which he viewed with rapture. At Constantinople he had the honour of painting the Sultan for the Queen. He returned by Egypt, but never saw his native land again. He died off Gibraltar, and, the burial service having been read by torchlight, his body was committed to the deep, on the 1st of June, 1841.

In the lives of English painters the story of Benjamin Robert Haydon is perhaps the saddest. In youth he devoted himself with such zeal to the study of art, that people wondered how he ever found time to eat. He was one of those men of genius who may be called "unlucky." He was in pecuniary difficulties, though his father allowed him £200 per annum, in the earlier part of his career. He applied for admission into the Academy, but did not

obtain a single vote; and he got involved in controversies, which continued to embitter his life. He succeeded at last, however, by his energy, in commanding public attention and winning fame. For the "Judgment of Solomon" he received £700, with £100 voted to him by the directors of the British Institution, and the freedom of Plymouth. He wrote a long and elaborate essay on painting, for the "Encyclopædia Britannica," which has been twice reprinted. In 1823 he was confined in the

portraiture as full and frank as that of Rousseau's "Confessions."

Believing that he had a grand mission, as the apostle and martyr of high art, he felt that he had a right to the sympathy and support of the nation, which led him to indulge in loud self-laudation, and to levy contributions on his friends without scruple. In pursuance of his mission, he delivered lectures throughout England and Scotland, which were distinguished by great ability, his language

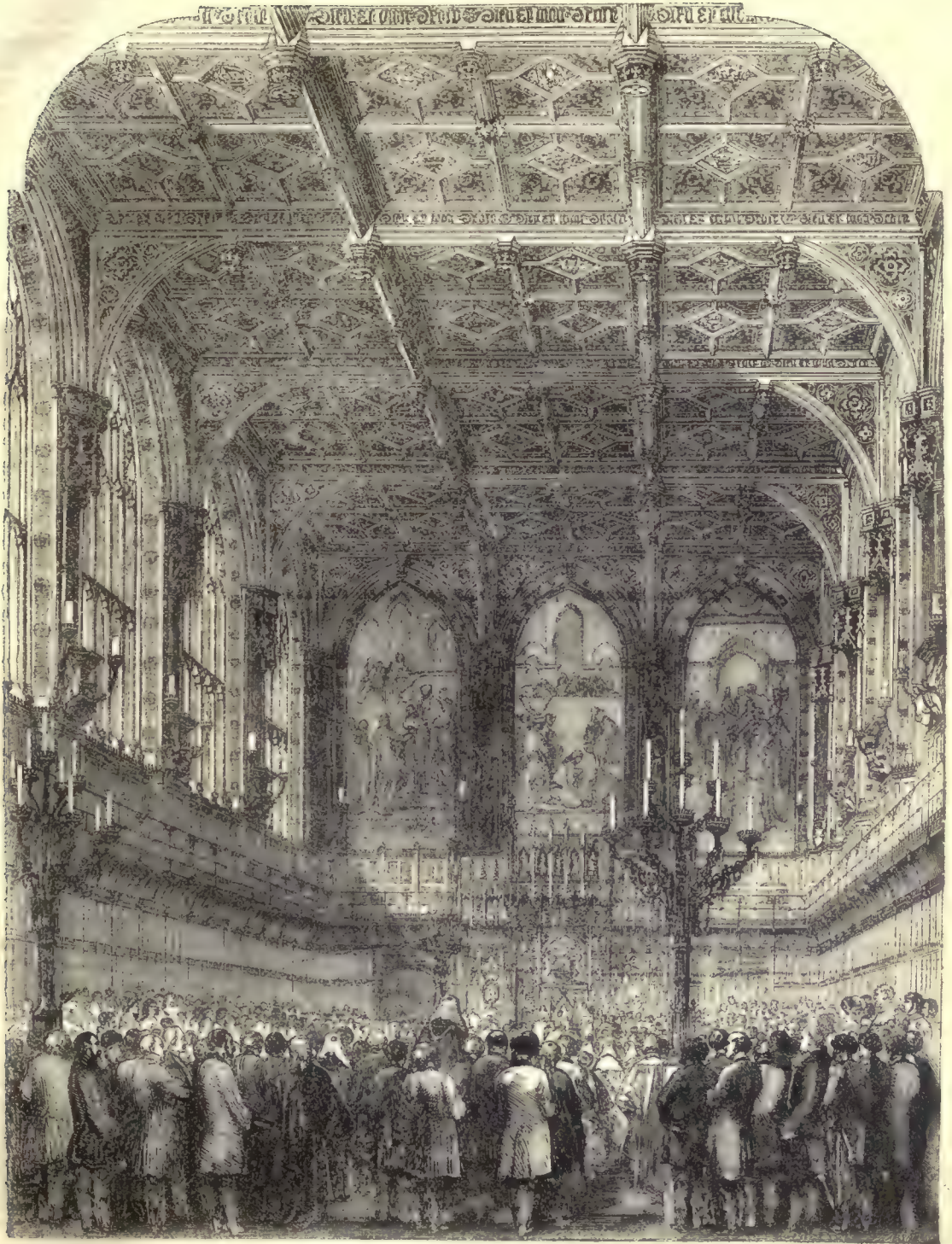


SIR DAVID WILKIE.

King's Bench as a debtor, and there he produced "The Mock Election," for which George IV. gave him £500, and this enabled him to purchase his release. He produced several pictures now in rapid succession—"Napoleon at St. Helena," for Sir Robert Peel; "Waiting for the *Times*," purchased by the Marquis of Stafford; and several others. In 1834 he completed "The Reform Banquet," which contained 197 portraits. He might have lived independently by his profession if he had possessed common prudence but his mind was peculiarly ill-regulated, as appears by his autobiography, which contains a self-

being powerful, fluent, and appropriate, and his style enlivened with wit and humour and a play of fancy, which presented a strange contrast to the settled anxiety of his mind and the usually tempestuous state of his feelings.

The want of a guiding moral power within had at length a fatal result. On the 22nd of June, 1846, in the sixty-first year of his age, he was discovered lying dead on the floor of his studio, immediately in front of "Alfred the Great and the First British Jury"—a colossal picture on which he had been just engaged; his white hair satu-



INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

rated with blood, shed by his own hand. He had been in great pecuniary distress, which had been relieved by a donation from Sir Robert Peel of £50, the last sum he had received. The same generous benefactor obtained for his

widow a pension of £50 a year, to which Lady Peel added a pension of £25 a year. Other friends came to the assistance of the family, among whom were Lord Carlisle, Mr. Justice Talfourd, and Count D'Orsay. A public subscrip-

tion was opened, which produced £2,000 for their benefit.

A vigorous writer on art asks:—"Why is it that sculpture, generally confessed the noblest of the fine arts, has no real hold on the thousands who are interested by painting? Why will these pages be less looked at than the rest of the book? The answer is not difficult; but so much unpleasant matter must come out in making it, that the writer enters on his task with the most real reluctance. Sculpture was first misdirected, then degraded, until the art fell to its present forlorn state, divided for the most part between mythology, sentimentalism, smoothness, and slovenliness. What it might be, even what it has been, are questions rarely asked. There seems no standard and no aim about it in the minds of artists or spectators; no one compares a statue with nature, or asks if her fine lines and surfaces have been slurred or rendered. The sculptor works, not like the painter, for the sympathy and interest of thousands, but for the personal fancy of a patron, or the conventional orders of a committee, turning out an angel or a Cupid with equal facility, and ready with a monument, which might be the study of a life, at a moment's notice. If sculpture appeals at all to popular sympathies, they are the sympathies of ignorance, for mechanical truth or mechanical grandeur, for sensual polish or spasmodic distortion, for 'picturesque' sculpture, or the facetious or 'sweetly pretty' style—everything, in short, which the art should shun—not for deep or tender feeling, truth to nature, freshness of invention, refinement in handling, loftiness in aim; for those qualities, in a word, without which the block in the mountain side is far more living than the statue. That so few look for such work, or will take the pains to understand it, is another grievous obstacle; and the writer hence wishes it to be remembered how strongly sculpture has been depressed by these powerful causes from without, dulling the invention and staying the hand of naturally gifted men, and filling the ranks with many who cannot rise beyond the manufacturer, or gain a success ruinous to their art by greedy haste or charlatan cleverness." *

The substantial truth of this statement cannot be denied, and therefore there is not much to record of the progress of sculpture. Several of the most distinguished artists in this department, who flourished during the last two reigns, were mentioned in a former volume; and those that might now be added, belong more properly, in the maturity of their fame, to the present reign. The taste for statuary, as well as for painting and music, has no doubt been extensively diffused among the people of late years; but during the period under review they can scarcely be said to have been popularised, as we shall find them to be hereafter, by means of exhibitions, concerts, and illustrated publications. Still, it was during that period that art gradually found greater freedom of action, and came to rely for support more upon the many than the few—more upon the nation than upon the government; and accordingly assimilated itself more to natural tastes,

opening resources of pleasure and enjoyment that at one time, from notions now deemed false and pedantic, were not thought to be within its proper province. The invention and rapid development of photography within that period contributed largely to bring about this result. The founders of the British school of arts thought it essential that it should be taken under the especial care of government. Sir Joshua Reynolds earnestly inculcated this principle; Barry, Benjamin West, Stoddard, Hilton, and Haydon, exerted all their eloquence and influence to enforce it; and the last of these, when the only remaining representative of the old dogma, was at length borne down by bitter disappointment at finding that the benefits so confidently predicted by the trial which the government gave, in connection with the ornamentation of the Houses of Parliament, had not been realised.

The outcry against academies and public exhibitions which accompanied the clamour for government patronage has also gone down, and the most sensitive artist, however he may complain of unfairness in the hanging of his pictures, now admits that for the man of true merit the best chance of fame and fortune is to have his works exhibited before the public. Judges and juries may err; but, with all its drawbacks, no better mode of causing works of art to be properly appreciated has been yet devised. It brings to bear the principle of competition, which more than anything stimulates genius to excel.

"The extent and value of the various collections of modern art in London and the other emporiums of manufacture and merchandise is quite marvellous; and these and similar collections, for the most part, have been formed, not with a view of qualifying their possessors to be ranked as connoisseurs—though, certainly, the frequent exercise of judgment must lead to knowledge—but on the sound principle of making art the means of imparting to themselves and their friends pleasure of a highly intellectual kind; while, from the exercise of those large but keen views that enter so much into the mercantile character, the sums invested on art property are, in most cases, at any time capable of being turned to good account. Hence the great vigour displayed by art in this country, and the enormous patronage bestowed on it by the public within the last few years, must be set down to the circumstance of its being now admitted by artists and the public generally to be a settled principle that, in a community socially and politically constituted like ours, art cannot and ought not to depend for encouragement on government patronage. Freed from the notion of government employment that obstructed so many of our painters some years ago, the artist can now give his whole attention to produce a work that will interest the public, from its attracting sympathy by touching the feelings, or by recalling and illustrating past events of importance, or by perpetuating momentous occurrences of the times, or by placing before the eye scenes of beauty and grandeur; and when this is done, he knows his efforts will not pass unnoticed, for, in the exhibitions now opened in all our large cities, his productions, if up to a certain standard, will be admitted, and brought before an assemblage eager to find out works evincing

* Palgrave's "Handbook of the International Exhibition," p. 85.

talent, and, by praising and purchasing them, to reward the artist by whom they are executed."*

In architecture, the first place is due to the patriarch of the science, Sir John Soane, who was employed in erecting or improving numerous public edifices in the metropolis and elsewhere. In 1826 he built the Freemasons' Hall, in Great Queen Street, having been chosen grand superintendent of works to the fraternity of Freemasons some years before. In 1833 he completed the new State Paper Office. He was now in his eightieth year, and he retired from the active labours of the profession in which he had been engaged for sixty years, during forty-five of which he had been in the service of the Bank of England. A most munificent benefactor of his own art, he gave £500 towards the erection of the Freemasons' Hall, and the same amount to the Royal British Institution, Pall Mall. He subscribed £1,000 towards erecting the monument to the Duke of York; and he bequeathed his collection of works of ancient and modern art, valued at more than £50,000, in perpetuity to the nation, for the benefit of students in the arts, and especially for the advancement of architectural knowledge. At his death, which occurred January 20th, 1837, his splendid house and museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields became also the property of the public.

Sir Charles Barry was the architect of numerous buildings, but his greatest work was the New Palace of Westminster. When the old Houses of Parliament were burned down in 1834, amongst the numerous designs sent in, Mr. Barry's was selected, and he had the honour of constructing the magnificent temple of legislation, in which the most powerful body in the world debates and deliberates, upon the old, classic site, rendered sacred by so many events in our history. It has been disputed whether the style of the building is altogether worthy of the locality and the object, and whether grander and more appropriate effects might not have been produced by the vast sums expended. But it has been remarked in defence of the artist, that the design was made almost at the commencement of the revival of our national architecture, and that, this fact being considered, the impression will be one of admiration for the genius of the architect that conceived such a work; and the conviction will remain that, by it, Sir Charles Barry has done incalculable service to the progress of English art.

The two Pugins, father and son, had much to do with the revival of Gothic architecture among us. The father, Augustus, born in France in 1769, came over to London to practise his profession. In 1821-3 he published "*Specimens of Gothic Architecture*," selected from various ancient edifices in England; and in 1825-8 "*Specimens of the Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*." The year before his death, in 1832, he assisted his son in producing a work entitled "*Gothic Ornaments*," selected from various buildings in England and France. Augustus Welby Pugin, who was born in 1811, very soon eclipsed his father's fame. Having resolved to devote his time to the archaeological study of style and symbolism in architectural ornaments, he settled down at

Ramsgate in 1833, and carried his resolution into effect, both with pen and pencil. In 1835 he published designs for furniture, in the style of the fifteenth century; and designs for iron and brass work, in the style of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The year following appeared his "*Designs for Gold and Silver Ornaments, and Ancient Timber Houses*." His exclusive and ardent devotion to these studies, aided, no doubt, by his habits of seclusion, began to produce a morbid effect upon his intellect, which was shown in the overweening arrogance of a tract entitled "*Contrasts; or, a Parallel between Ancient and Modern Architecture*." This morbid tendency probably was increased by his becoming a member of the Roman Catholic church, in which a great field was opened for the display of his peculiar tastes, by the construction of buildings which he expected would shame the degenerate taste of the age, but which, too often, are found to be gloomy and inconvenient. His principal works are the Cathedral of St. George, Southwark, the Church of St. Barnabas, at Nottingham, the Cistercian Abbey of St. Bernard, in Leicestershire, the cathedral churches of Killarney and Enniscorthy, Alton Castle, and the model structure which he erected at his own place near Ramsgate. The Mediæval Court in the Exhibition of 1851 was associated in all minds with the name of Pugin. In his case genius was too nearly allied to madness. The awful boundary was passed towards the close of his life, when his friends were obliged to confine him in a lunatic asylum, from which he returned only to die in 1852. He did not, however, live entirely in vain. The influence he exerted on the architecture of the age was not confined to the Roman Catholic body; it led, not only in the improvement of the churches of the Establishment, but also in those of the Dissenters of every denomination, who have extensively adopted the Gothic style in their places of worship, which, it must be confessed, present a striking contrast to the unsightly, barn-like structures that had been the fashion in past times, when it seemed to have been the study of architects to associate ecclesiastical buildings with all that is ugly, repulsive, and contrary to good taste.

Among the historians of the time there are three or four names that deserve to be specially mentioned. The first of these is Sir James Mackintosh, who, notwithstanding the pressure of parliamentary duties and the attractions of London society, so far conquered his constitutional indolence, increased by his residence in India, as to produce some literary works, so valuable that it has been a source of regret that he could not find time to give to the world something more than fragments. His dissertation on "*The Progress of Ethical Philosophy*" shows what he could have accomplished in that field; while his three volumes of "*The History of England*" caused a general feeling of disappointment that he was not spared to complete the work. He was engaged on a history of the revolution of 1688, when he died, rather suddenly, in May, 1832.

The English Roman Catholics produced an historian—Dr. Lingard—who, for the correctness and strength of his diction, as well as the extent of his learning, ranks among

* "*Encyclopædia Britannica*."—*Painting*.

the first names in that department of literature. He was a man of great force of mind, remarkable acuteness in testing historical evidence, and considerable powers of description. Being a priest, it was not to be expected that he would be impartial in his treatment of the events and characters of the Reformation, and the subsequent conflicts between the churches of England and Rome. Of his own church he was a zealous defender and a skilful apologist; but where that bias did not interfere, his judgments were generally sound.

Henry Hallam occupies a higher ground than Lingard, having no party interests to serve, and having a mind singularly free from prejudice, as well as a conscientious regard for truth in his records and judgments; while his clear, impressive, and graceful style invests dry details with interest. His "View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages," a work of great learning and value, was followed, in 1827, by his "Constitutional History of England;" and ten years later he published, in four volumes, an "Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Centuries." This is his greatest work, and in point of learning, and utility, and purity of style, it may be regarded as one of the greatest in the English language. These works placed Mr. Hallam, by general consent, at the head of contemporary historians.

The history of the Peninsular war was written very ably and faithfully by a soldier who bore a distinguished part in it—Colonel W. F. P. Napier, one of three brothers, all eminently distinguished for their talents and achievements. About the time when this work was concluded appeared further illustrations of the war, in the "Despatches of Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington," which were edited by Lieutenant-Colonel Gurwood, in two volumes. Of these despatches it was justly remarked in the *Edinburgh Review* that no man ever before had the gratification of himself witnessing the formation of such a monument to his glory. His "Despatches" will continue to furnish through every age lessons of practical wisdom, which cannot be too highly prized by public men in every station, whilst they will supply military commanders in particular with examples for their guidance, which they cannot too carefully study, nor too anxiously endeavour to emulate.

Thomas Moore, the poet, in the latter period of his life, published several biographical works—namely, a "Life of Richard Brinsley Sheridan," in 1825; "Notices of the Life of Lord Byron," 1830; and "Memoirs of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," in 1831. Byron had written memoirs of his own life, which he presented to Moore, and by the publication of which a very large sum of money could have been made; but Moore generously placed the MS. at the disposal of Mrs. Leigh, the poet's sister and executrix; and from a regard to his memory, they were consigned to the flames. It is supposed, however, that all that was valuable in them was found in the noble lord's journals and memorandum-books. Among literary biographies—a class of publications highly interesting to cultivated minds—the first place is due to Lockhart's "Life of Sir Walter Scott," which comes next to Boswell's "Life of Johnson,"

which is a perfect model in that department of literature.

The number of distinguished authors on miscellaneous subjects was very great at this time. In jurisprudence and political economy there was Jeremy Bentham, whose course ended in 1834; his eminent disciples, Mr. Mill, Dr. Bowring, and Mr. Hill Burton; Archbishop Whately Mr. McCulloch, Mr. Sadleir, and Mr. N. W. Senior. De Quincy began his brilliant career as an author in 1822, by the publication of "The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater." Mr. William Hazlitt, who displayed great versatility of talent as a public writer and lecturer, died in 1837. William Howitt is the author of several able and popular works. In 1834 he published "The History of Priestcraft," which was followed by "Rural Life in England," "Colonisation and Christianity," and other works. Mr. J. C. Loudon was the author of four "Cyclopædias" connected with horticulture, and stands at the head of the numerous class of writers on agricultural subjects. In 1827 began the plan of publishing monthly volumes of valuable scientific works, previously so expensive as to be beyond the reach of the multitude. To Mr. Constable, of Edinburgh, belongs the credit of this plan; but he failed before it could be carried into effect. His name, however, was given to the series; and "Constable's Miscellany" was started in 1827. The works were issued in monthly numbers, at a shilling each, and in volumes at 3s. 6d. each. Mr. Murray, the eminent London publisher, took up the idea, and published monthly volumes of "The Family Library," at five shillings each. A series of "Sacred Classics" was also published. The "Edinburgh Cabinet Library" commenced in 1830, and contained the works of some of the first writers of the day. There was also a series called a "Library of Entertaining Knowledge," in four-shilling volumes, started by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which was established in 1825. The first of its sixpenny treatises on science was issued in 1827. It was "A Discourse on the Objects, Advantages, and Pleasures of Science," by Henry Brougham. The society thus began to work upon a vast field, a mere skirt of which it was able to cultivate. But it was soon entered by other labourers, who showed that private enterprise could accomplish more than public societies in the diffusion of useful knowledge. Since that time the stream of periodical literature has been enlarging, till it has become a vast river, expanding every day, into which ten thousand tributary minds are constantly pouring the resources of their genius and learning—at once gratifying and exciting the popular thirst for knowledge.

Providence seems to allot to a community an average amount of genius, which, if employed in one direction, cannot act in another. The genius of the times we are contemplating spent its main force in material creations. A great engineer may be regarded as a great poet. He constructs forms of beauty out of roughly-quarried materials, which are not only "a joy for ever," gratifying and educating the taste of posterity, but also confer an additional boon upon mankind, by combining utility with beauty. The active and inventive intellects of the age were

attracted to speculations and studies connected with material progress, not only by the general excitement of the public mind upon such subjects, but also by the enormous wealth resulting from successful mechanical inventions or scientific discoveries. Perhaps it is owing to these circumstances that so few poets flourished at this time, and that the fields of poetry and fiction were left to be cultivated, to so large an extent, by women. Scott and his contemporaries had run their course, and the men that succeeded them were little better than gleaners on the field which they had reaped.

Sir Walter Scott had, perhaps, left the most permanent traces behind him. We have on many occasions mentioned this illustrious writer; perhaps this is a fitting time to speak more in detail of his career. He was born, in 1771, of a very respectable family, at Edinburgh. In early life he gave but little promise of the eminence he afterwards attained. His residence, during childhood, in a part of Scotland remarkable for its historical reminiscences, gave to his mind a tinge which became only more decided as years rolled on. Being removed to Edinburgh for the completion of his education, his peculiar talents began to show themselves; he exhibited a decided tendency to literary pursuits, and evinced, even at twelve years of age, unmistakable evidence of a poetic genius. But he was more remarkable for the extraordinary powers of his memory, for his agility in gymnastic exercises, notwithstanding a lameness which was incurable, and for merry jests and amusing stories, than for progress in his studies. Nevertheless, he left school with a large amount of general information, which proved highly valuable to him in after life; and by the perusal of histories, voyages, &c., at home, he increased his stock of that literary and antiquarian knowledge for which he had so pre-eminent a taste. At the university he was not very successful; he learned but little Latin, and less Greek, and he had no liking whatever for philosophical or mathematical science. But he acquired a moderate acquaintance with French, Italian, and Spanish, to which he afterwards added some German. He was destined by his father for the legal profession, and was called to the bar at twenty-one years of age. But as his attention had been more assiduously devoted to poetry and romance than to jurisprudence, he was more distinguished as an admirable story-teller than an advocate. He entered on the career of an author while very young; his earlier publications, though not successful in a pecuniary way, were greatly admired by good judges; and his undoubted talents, as well as his family connections, introduced him to men high in rank, whose influence became valuable to him, and also to the most distinguished literary characters of the time. His appointment as sheriff depute of Selkirkshire, by securing him a competent income, while its duties demanded but little of his time, enabled him to devote himself to his favourite pursuits; especially as his resources were augmented by a small patrimony, which he obtained at the death of his father, and by property he received with the lady whom he married. At this period he produced several poems, some of which were of considerable length, and he acquired a large amount of celebrity. His income from various sources became, after some time, very considerable;

and happy would it have been for him had he been content with it. But ambition, of which he had long shown symptoms, became a master passion, and he yielded fatally to its influence. To hasten the acquisition of wealth, as a means of adding to the consequence and importance of his family, which was the dream of his life, he became a partner in a large publishing firm, which afterwards involved him in its ruin, and whose liabilities swallowed up the profits of a most successful career. The demands which it continually made on his resources, compelled him to undertake literary drudgery, in addition to his ordinary labours; and the magnitude of its enterprises filled him with continual anxiety. His time was unremittingly occupied: from 1815 to 1825 he vanished, indeed, from public view; yet he was never more thoroughly employed. "Waverley" made its appearance in 1814; but the name of the writer was, for some time, involved in impenetrable mystery. Its success was unexampled, and it was followed by many similar productions. When the hour of Sir W. Scott's seemingly greatest prosperity had arrived, and his most sanguine expectations appeared to be nearly realised, the crash came. The firm, of which he had so long been a secret partner, stopped payment; and this event, besides entailing upon him an immense pecuniary loss, inflicted a deep wound on his feelings, by proclaiming to the world his connection with mercantile speculations. His conduct upon this trying occasion was, however, in accordance with his whole life; he refused to avail himself of any legal technicalities for the purpose of diminishing his responsibilities; and he not only gave up to the creditors of the concern with which he was so unfortunately connected all he then possessed, but devoted the energies of the remainder of his life to make up the large deficit that still remained. He subsequently realised the enormous sum of £40,000 by his writings; and shortly after his death his debts were paid in full by his executors. But his exertions had been too much for him; he became ultimately a wreck both in body and mind; every effort to recover health was in vain; the last few months of his life were spent with very rare intervals of consciousness; and he expired, it may be said, prematurely, in the sixty-first year of his age. He ranks high as a poet; but far higher as the discoverer of a new world of fiction; in describing which, however numerous those who attempt to follow the course which he pursued, he is little likely ever to have a successful rival.

The age was remarkably prolific in female poets and novelists, some of whom have taken as high a rank in literature as their sex have done in any age. Lady Blessington and Lady Morgan were not young at the death of George III., but many of their most celebrated works were published during the two subsequent reigns. The former, soon after the death of Lord Blessington in 1829, fixed her residence in London at Gore House, which became the centre of attraction for men of talent and distinction in every department. Even great statesmen and ministers of the Crown sometimes spent their evenings in her circle, which was then unrivalled in London for the combined charms of beauty, wit, and brilliant conversation; and besides, all the celebrities and lions of London were sure to be met there. The ambiguous attachment that so

long subsisted between her and Count D'Orsay, one of the most accomplished men of the age, however, excluded Lady Blessington from the best society. The heavy expenses of her establishment compelled her to work hard with her pen, and she produced a number of works, which were in great demand in the circulating libraries of the day. Debt at length broke up the establishment at Gore House, and all its precious collections passed under the hammer of the auctioneer, to satisfy inexorable creditors. Lady Blessington removed to Paris, where she lived in retirement for some years, and died in 1849.

Lady Morgan (Sydney Owenson) was before the country

years enjoyed a pension of £300, conferred on her by Earl Grey.

One of the most charming poets of the time was Mrs. Hemans, whose maiden name was Felicia Dorothea Browne, daughter of a Liverpool merchant, and sister of Colonel Browne, a distinguished officer, who was for many years one of the commissioners of the metropolitan police in Dublin. Her father being unfortunate in business, removed, when she was nine years old, to North Wales, where she remained until she was sixteen, imbibing, amidst its wild and romantic scenery, the impassioned love of Nature that distinguishes all her poetry. She may be said to have



JEREMY BENTHAM.

as an author for nearly half a century. She was born in Dublin, in 1783. Before she was sixteen years of age she was the author of two novels. Her third work, "The Wild Irish Girl," brought to her the fame for which she longed, and made her a celebrity. In 1811 she married Sir Charles Morgan, a Dublin physician. Her principal works as a novelist were "Patriotic Sketches," "O'Donnell," "Florence Mc'Carthy," and "The O'Briens and O'Flahertys," which was published in 1827. She was also the author of works on France and Italy; "The Life and Times of Salvator Rosa." In 1841 she published, in connection with her husband, a collection of sketches, called "The Book without a Name." She had for a number of

lispied in numbers, for she published a volume of poems—"Early Blossoms"—before she was fifteen years of age. Shortly after she met with Captain Hemans, of the 4th regiment, who was smitten with her charms, and after an engagement of three years they were married in 1812. She was at that time a very lovely creature. Her sister, in her "Memoirs of Mrs. Hemans," thus describes her appearance:—"The mantling bloom of her cheeks was shaded by a profusion of natural ringlets, of a rich golden brown; and the ever-varying expression of her brilliant eyes gave a changeful play to her countenance, which made it impossible for a painter to do justice to it." The union was an unhappy one. After six years, during which they had five

sons, Captain Hemans removed to Italy, ostensibly for the benefit of his health; but from that time until her death, in 1835, she never beheld her husband's face, during those long years of heartless desertion nobly struggling to maintain her children, and bitterly bewailing that worship which had been the brightest dream of her young and confiding heart. In 1819 she obtained a prize of £50 for the best poem on the subject of Sir William Wallace; and in 1821 that awarded by the Royal Society of Literature for the best poem on the subject of Dartmoor. Her next production was a tragedy, "The Vespers of Palermo," which was unsuccessful on the stage. "The

of the Lakes. On her return she went to reside in Dublin, where she devoted herself to the education of her five boys. She was the object of regard and affectionate interest to a large circle; but she suffered greatly from ill health, and her death was preceded by a long and painful illness.

Lord Jeffrey described her poetry as "infinitely sweet, elegant, and tender; touching and contemplative, rather than vehement and overpowering; finished throughout with exquisite delicacy of execution, and informed with purity and loftiness of feeling; the diction always beautiful, harmonious, and free; and the themes, though of infinite variety, uniformly treated with a grace, origin-



MISS LANDON ("L. E. L.")

Forest Sanctuary" appeared in 1826, and in 1828 "Records of Woman." In 1830 appeared "Songs of the Affections," and in four years after, "National Lyrics," "Hymns for Childhood," and "Scenes and Hymns of Life." There was a collective edition of her works published, with a memoir by her sister, in 1839, and several other editions subsequently, not only in this country, but in America, where her poems were exceedingly popular. In 1829 she paid a visit to Scotland, where she received a most cordial welcome from Sir Walter Scott, Lord Jeffrey, and other distinguished literary characters. In the following year she visited Wordsworth, and was delighted with the scenery

ality, and judgment which marked the master hand." Sir Archibald Alison remarks "that the genius of woman at this period produced a rival to Coleridge, if not in depth of thought, at least in tenderness of feeling and beauty of expression. Mrs. Hemans was imbued with the very soul of lyric poetry; she only required to have written a little less to have been one of the greatest in that branch that England ever produced." The Ettrick Shepherd described every line of her poetry as like a sad or cheerful smile, and every poem as being in a sense a picture of herself. "Her genius," says Allan Cunningham, "is of the domestic kind, and her best songs are rightly named 'of

the affections.' She was by far the most popular of our poetesses, alike at home and beyond the Atlantic." "Her poetry," says Mr. Moir, "is intensely and entirely feminine; and in my estimation, this is the highest praise which, in one point of view, could be awarded it." Bancroft, the American historian, remarks: "She adds the dignity of her sex to a high sense of the duties of a poet; and in the pursuit of literary renown, she never forgets what is due to feminine reserve." "Her inspiration," says Gilfillan, "always pauses at the feminine point. She is no sibyl, tossed to and fro in the tempest of furious excitement, but ever the calm mistress of her highest and stormiest emotions. The finest compliment we can pay her, perhaps the finest compliment that it is possible to pay a woman as a moral being, is to compare her to one of Shakespeare's women, and to say, Had Imogen, or Isabella, or Cornelia become an author, she had so written." Mr. William Howitt remarks, in his work upon "Eminent British Poets," that from the hour of Mrs. Hemans' acquaintance with German literature "she discovered her own forte, and a new life of tenderness and feeling was manifest in all she wrote. She became an almost constant writer in Blackwood's and Colburn's Magazines. Schiller, Goethe, Korner, and Tieck—how sensibly is the influence of their spirit felt in 'The Forest Sanctuary.' How different was the tone of this to all which had gone before. The cold classical model was abandoned; the heart and the fancy spoke out in every line—warm, free, solemn, and tenderly thoughtful."

In Mrs. Hemans, woman's heart, purified and spiritualised by affliction, became a fountain of poetry, and by its sacred and beneficent outpourings she merited the beautiful tribute of Mrs. Sigourney:—

"Every unborn age
Shall mix thee with its household charities:
The hoary sire shall bow his deafened ear,
And greet thy sweet words with his benison;
The mother shrine thee as a vestal flame
In the lone temple of her sanctity
And the young child that takes thee by the hand,
Shall travel with a surer step to heaven."

Letitia Elizabeth Landon, known as one of the most eminent female poets of her time, by the signature "L. E. L." which she appended to her numerous contributions in the magazines, was born at Hans Place, Chelsea, in 1802. Her "Poetical Sketches" were published first in the "Literary Gazette." In 1824 appeared her "Improvisatrice." She was the author of two other volumes of poetry, and of a successful novel. She was an industrious worker, and after her father's death she not only supported herself, but assisted her relatives, by her unrelaxing literary labours. A spirit of melancholy pervades her writings; but it is stated by Mr. L. Blanchard, in her "Life and Literary Remains," which he published, that she was remarkable for the vivacity and playfulness of her disposition. Her poetry ranked very high in public estimation for its lyric beauty and touching pathos; but the circumstances of her early death, which was the subject of much controversy, invested her name with a tragic and romantic interest. In 1838 she was married to Mr. George Maclean, Governor of Cape Coast Castle.

She landed there with her husband in the August of that year, and was settling down to literary labour, apparently in the enjoyment of her usual health. She had been employed writing a number of affectionate letters to her friends in England, breathing a cheerful and hopeful spirit, when on the 16th of October she was found lying dead on the floor of her room, having in her hand a bottle containing prussic acid, a portion of which she had taken. Whether it was taken with a view to self-destruction, or whether it was an accidental over-dose of a remedy which, as her husband alleged, she had been accustomed to use for spasmodic pain in the stomach, was long a question keenly discussed in the public journals. The circumstances of her marriage seemed to favour the supposition that the unhappy lady committed suicide. A more unsuitable match it seems impossible to conceive. She was gentle, refined, pre-eminently gifted with genius and sensibility, with a heart yearning for affection. He was coarse and licentious in his manners, with a savage temper, and sneered at poetry and sentiment. Her maid was the only European in the place with whom she could exchange a thought, and she was about to return home the next day, leaving her mistress in a condition of perfect loneliness. We can easily understand how a mind like hers, delighting in genial and cultivated society, should, under such circumstances, have been suddenly prostrated with a sense of loneliness, desolation, and despair, to find all the joyous aspirations of her youth, all the fond illusions and blissful dreams of life, thus ended. These facts are stated on the authority of Dr. R. R. Madden, of Dublin, in his "Life of Lady Blessington," at whose request he visited Cape Coast Castle, for the purpose of erecting a votive tablet to the memory of "L. E. L."

The Hon. Mrs. Caroline Elizabeth Norton, the second daughter of the late Mr. Thomas Sheridan, and granddaughter of the celebrated Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was born in 1808. She early manifested the proverbial talent of her family. At the age of nineteen, having been left an orphan, she married the Hon. George Norton, brother to Lord Grantley, and then a police magistrate in London. The marriage proved unhappy, and she was separated from her husband, in 1840, under the most painful circumstances; the effect of which on her mind is indeed perceptible in the pervading sadness of her subsequent works. In her seventeenth year she had composed "The Sorrows of Rosalie," a pathetic story of village life, in verse. Her next poem was "The Undying One," founded upon the legend of "The Wandering Jew." This was followed, in 1840, by "The Dream," and other poems. Her pen has been ever since incessantly employed. Among her works was one of the best novels of her time, "Stuart of Dunleath." A writer in the *Quarterly Review* speaks of Mrs. Norton as "the Byron of modern poetesses. She has very much of that intense personal passion by which Byron's poetry is distinguished from the larger grasp and deeper communion with man and Nature of Wordsworth. She has also Byron's beautiful intervals of tenderness, his strong practical thought, and his forceful expression. It is not an artificial imitation, but a natural parallel."

Among the female poets of the day the following deserve

honourable mention, though not stars of the first magnitude:—Caroline Bowles (Mrs. Southey), author of "The Widow's Tale," and other poems, published in 1822; "The Birthday," and other poems, in 1836; and "Solitary Hours," in 1839. Elizabeth B. Browning was so good a classical scholar that she wrote a translation of "Prometheus Bound." She was also the author of two original volumes, "The Seraphim," and other poems; and "The Romaunt of the Page."

Mrs. Mary Howitt is the author of many works, concerning which it has been truly said "that the whole are marked by a graceful intelligence and a simple tenderness, which at once charm the reader, and win his affections for the author." In 1823 Mr. and Mrs. Howitt published a joint work, "The Forest Minstrel," and, in 1827, "The Desolation of Eyam," and other poems. They also commenced jointly "The Book of the Seasons," in 1831.

Robert Pollok was a young Scottish minister, who rose suddenly to popularity by the publication of a poem in blank verse, entitled "The Course of Time." It was long and discursive, extending to ten books. The style was very unequal, sometimes rising to Miltonic heights, and often sinking to tame prose. The author had a wonderful command of words for one so young, and time would, no doubt, have mellowed what was crude and refined what was coarse, if he had not been prematurely cut off, just when his genius and his goodness had gathered round him a host of warm friends. He died of consumption, on the 17th of September, 1827. His early death contributed to the popularity of the poem, which ran through many editions.

John Wilson, though born so far back as 1785, was one of the writers of our times most distinguished for originality, freshness, power, and rich fancy, combined with learning and eloquence. As "Christopher North," he was long the delight of the readers of *Blackwood's Magazine*. His criticisms on poetry were distinguished by a profusion of thought and imagery, which flowed forth so rapidly, and sometimes so little under the control of judgment, that there seemed no reason why the stream of illustration should not flow on for ever. He was a poet as well as a critic; but it is a singular fact that his imagination, like that of Milton, was more active in prose than in verse. In the latter, his genius was like a spirited horse in harness; in the former, like the same horse unbridled, and bounding wildly over the prairies. Accordingly, as Lord Jeffrey remarks, "almost the only passions with which his poetry is conversant are the gentler sympathies of our nature—tender compassion, confiding affection, and guiltless sorrow. From all these there results, along with the most touching and tranquillising sweetness, a certain monotony and languor, which, to those who read poetry for amusement merely, will be apt to appear like dullness, and must be felt as a defect by all who have been used to the variety, rapidity, and energy of the popular poetry of the day." Yet in his nature he was the reverse of all this—ardent, energetic, impetuous, dashing; a fine, athletic man, vigorous alike in body and mind. His principal poetical work was "The Isle of Palms," published in 1812, which was followed by one more elaborate, "The

City of the Plague." Among the most popular of his prose fictions is "The Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," "The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay," and "The Foreresters." But it was in periodical literature that he shone most brightly. Soon after the establishment of *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1817, he became its chief editor, and thenceforward he poured forth through this organ all the treasures of his intellect. He produced, month after month, a series of articles "which long filled the public with mingled delight and astonishment by their extraordinary combination of the most opposite qualities—pathos the purest, the deepest, and the most tender; wild, wanton, and withering sarcasm; sentiment refined and exalted to the pitch of devotion; and humour of the freest, broadest, and most exuberant vein." In 1820 he succeeded Dr. Thomas Browne as Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, which he held till 1851, when he resigned, in consequence of ill health, receiving, about the same time, a pension of £300 a year from the Crown. As a professor, he was greatly beloved by his students, on account of his genial nature and the warm interest he took in their welfare; and he was always surrounded by troops of friends, who respected his character almost as much as they admired his genius. He died in 1854.

The most distinguished dramatic writers of the time were Sheridan Knowles, Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer, Serjeant Talfourd, and Miss Mitford. Mr. Knowles's first drama, "Virginius," which appeared in 1820, was the most successful. Subsequently appeared "The Wife, a Tale of Mantua," "The Hunchback," "Caius Gracchus," "The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green," "William Tell," "The Love Chase," "Old Maids," "The Daughter," &c. Mr. Knowles was the son of James Knowles, author of the dictionary which bears his name. The dramatist commenced life as a teacher of elocution in Belfast; but his genius prompted him to seek a higher career, in which his industry was crowned with a large measure of success, for he was a successful actor as well as a writer of plays. Ultimately, however, he became disgusted with the stage from religious scruples, and taking a fancy to polemics, he published two attacks upon Romanism, entitled, "The Rock of Rome" and "The Idol Demolished by its own Priest." He ended his career as a preacher in connection with the Baptist denomination, having enjoyed a literary pension of £200 a-year since 1849.

Sir Bulwer Lytton is chiefly distinguished as one of the most successful novelists of his day, but he won fame also as a dramatic author, his chief productions in this line being "The Lady of Lyons," "La Vallière," and "Richelieu." He was born in 1805, and was the youngest son of General Bulwer, of Haydon Hall. He commenced the career of authorship very early, having written "Weeds and Wild Flowers," "O'Neil, the Rebel," and "Falkland," before the appearance of "Pelham" in 1828. Then in rapid succession appeared "The Disowned," "Devereux," "Paul Clifford," "Eugene Aram," "The Last Days of Pompeii," "Rienzi," "Ernest Maltravers," "Alice, or the Mysteries," "The Last of the Barons," "Harold, or the Last of the Saxon Kings," and several others. In 1831 he

entered the House of Commons, and represented Lincoln till 1841. His political career, however, belongs to the reign of Queen Victoria.

Mr. Justice Talfourd, an eminent barrister, commenced his career as circuit law reporter for the *Times*. In 1835 he was returned to parliament as member for Reading, his native town, and he was so successful in his profession, that he was raised to the bench in 1849. He was the author of three tragedies—"Ion," "The Athenian Captive," and "Glencoe." He was also the author of some charming prose works. He was a man of genial disposition, of real genius, highly cultivated taste, and of strong popular sympathies. His sudden death occurred under circumstances singularly impressive and solemn. While addressing the grand jury at Stafford, in 1854, on the unnatural and deplorable estrangement between employers and employed in England, he said, "If I were to be asked what is the great want of English society, I would say in one word—the want of sympathy between class and class." This was the last sentence he ever uttered. He was seized with a fit of apoplexy as it escaped his lips, and died almost before he could be carried out of court.

The success of the Waverley Novels turned the main force of the genius and literary resources of the country into the ever widening channel of prose fiction. No fewer than thirty-five names of note appeared before the public as novel writers about that time. In Scotland, under the immediate shadow of the author of "Waverley," came John Galt, Mrs. Johnstone, Miss Ferrier, the Ettrick Shepherd, Allan Cunningham, Wilson, Lockhart, Landor, Picken, Moir. In Ireland, and of Irish birth, there were Colley, Grattan, Crofton Croker, Banim, Gerald Griffin, Samuel Lover, and last, though not least, William Carleton. In England, and chiefly of English birth, were Mrs. Shelley, Lady Caroline Lamb, Peacocke, Thomas Hope, Leigh Hunt, Theodore and James Hook, Morier, Lister, Ward, Gleig, Horace Smith, Miss Mitford, Miss Landon, Mrs. Gore, Mrs. Trollope, Sir Bulwer Lytton, D'Israeli, Captain Marryat, and Mr. James. Professor Masson gives the following statistics of novels in the British Museum:—"In 1820 the number received was twenty-six; in 1830 the yearly number had increased to 100. Taking these data as approximately accurate, they give us the curious fact that the annual yield of British novels had been quadrupled by the time of Scott's death as compared with what it had been when he was in the middle of the 'Waverley' series, having risen from twenty-six a year, or a new novel every fortnight, to about 100 a year, or nearly two new novels every week; and, moreover, that this proportion of about 100 new novels every year, or two every week, has continued pretty steady since Scott's death, or if there has been any change, has fallen off lately, rather than increased. Making an average calculation from these facts, I find that there may have been in all about 3,000 novels, counting about 7,000 separate volumes, produced in these islands since the publication of 'Waverley.' And this corresponds pretty well with a calculation made on independent grounds. In the 'London Book Catalogue,' giving a classified index of all books published in Great Britain from the year 1816 to the year 1851 inclusive, the

novels or works of prose fiction occupy twenty-two pages, and amount to about 3,300 separate entries. In this list, however, reprints of old novels are included. Balancing these against the probable yield of the six years, from 1852 to 1857 inclusive, not embraced in the catalogue, I believe that my calculation, as just stated, may pass as near the truth." *

Our limits forbid further biographical details, but these are the less necessary, as authors who would have a strong claim upon our notice happily still survive among us, and will hereafter receive their due share of attention. We have noticed that a large number of the poets who flourished in the last two reigns were women; and we find that the sex maintained an equal proportion, and a still higher position, in the department of fiction. This fact was the subject of comment in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1830. The writer remarks:—"There are some things which women do better than men, and of these perhaps novel-writing is one. Naturally endowed with greater delicacy of taste and feeling, with a moral sense not blunted and debased by those contaminations to which men are exposed, leading lives rather of observation than of action, with leisure to attend to the minutiae of conduct and more subtle developments of character, they are peculiarly qualified for the task of exhibiting faithfully and pleasingly the various phases of domestic life, and those varieties which chequer the surface of society. Accordingly, their delineations, though perhaps less vigorous than those afforded by the other sex, are distinguished for the most part by greater fidelity and consistency, a more refined and happy discrimination, and, we must also add, a more correct estimate of right and wrong. In works which come from a female pen we are seldom offended by those moral monstrosities, those fantastic perversions of principle, which are too often to be met with in the fictions that have been written by men. Women are less stilted in their style; they are more content to describe naturally what they have observed, without attempting the introduction of those extraneous ornaments which are sometimes sought at the expense of truth. They are less ambitious, and are therefore more just; they are far more exempt from that prevailing literary vice of the present day—exaggeration—and have not taken their stand among the feverish followers of what may be called the *intense* style of writing—a style much practised by those who only inquire if a work is calculated to make a strong impression, and omit entirely the more important question, whether that impression be founded on truth or delusion. Hence the agonies and convulsions, and dreamy rhapsodies, and heated exhibitions of stormy passions, in which several of our writers have lately indulged. Imagination has been flattered into a self-sufficient abandonment of its alliance with judgment, to which disunion it is ever least prone where it has most real power; and 'fine creations' (well so called, as being unlike anything previously existing in nature) have been lauded, in spite of their internal falsity, as if they were of more value than the most accurate delineations of that world which we see around us."

* "British Novelists and their Styles," by David Masson, M.A., p. 212.

The changes in the manners and morals of the age since the reign of George III. have been sufficiently indicated in the preceding pages. There were corresponding changes gradually introduced in the world of fashion, though the conservative instinct of the aristocracy and the spirit of exclusiveness resisted innovation as long as possible. What was called "good society" was wonderfully select. The temple of fashion at the beginning of the reign of George IV. was Almack's; and the divinities which under the name of lady patronesses presided there were the Ladies Castlereagh, Jersey, Cowper, and Sefton, the Princess Esterhazy and the Countess Lieven. These and their associates gave the tone to the *beau monde*. We can scarcely now conceive the importance that was then attached to the privilege of getting admission to Almack's. Of the 300 officers of the foot-guards, not more than half a dozen were honoured with vouchers. The most popular and influential amongst the *grandes dames* was Lady Cowper, now Lady Palmerston. Lady Jersey was the reverse of popular, being inconceivably rude and insolent in her manner. "Many diplomatic arts, much finesse, and a host of intrigues were set in motion to get an invitation to Almack's. Very often persons whose rank and fortune entitled them to the *entrée* anywhere were excluded by the cliquism of the lady patronesses." Trowsers had come into general use. They had been first worn by children, then adopted in the army, and from the army, they came into fashion with civilians. But they were rigidly excluded from Almack's, as well as the black tie, which also came into use about this time. The female oligarchy who ruled the world of fashion, or tried to do so, issued a solemn proclamation that no gentleman should appear at the assemblies without being dressed in knee-breeches, white cravat, and *chapeaux bras*. On one occasion we are told, the Duke of Wellington was about to ascend the staircase of the ball-room, dressed in black trowsers, when the vigilant Mr. Willis, the guardian of the establishment, stepped forward, and said, "Your grace cannot be admitted in trowsers." Whereupon the great captain quietly retreated, without daring to storm the citadel of fashion. The principal dances at Almack's had been Scotch reels, and the old English country dance. In 1815, Lady Jersey introduced from Paris the quadrille, which has so long remained popular. The mazy waltz was also imported about the same time. Among the first who ventured to whirl round the *salons* of Almack's was Lord Palmerston, his favourite partner being Madame Lieven. This new dance was so diligently cultivated in the houses of the nobility and gentry that the upper classes were affected with a waltzing mania.

The coarse manners of the gentlemen were gradually yielding to refining influences, but the society of ladies amongst the upper classes was generally neglected. Husbands spent their days in hunting or other masculine occupations, and their evenings in dining and drinking; the dinner party, which commenced at seven, not breaking up before one in the morning. Four or five, or even six-bottle men were not uncommon among the nobility. Lord Eldon and his brother Lord Stowell used to say that they had drunk more bad port than any two men in England. The Italian Opera was then, as it is now, the greatest attrac-

tion. It became less exclusive in its arrangements when the Opera House was under the management of Mr. Waters; but the strictest etiquette was still kept up with regard to the dress of gentlemen, who were only admitted with knee-buckles, ruffles, and *chapeaux bras*. If there happened to be a drawing-room, the ladies as well as the gentlemen would come to the opera in their court dresses.

English cookery, even in the greatest houses, had not yet been much affected by French art. The dinners were remarkably solid, hot, and stimulating. Mulligatawny and turtle soups came first, then at one end of the table was uncovered the familiar salmon, and at the other the turbot surrounded by smelts. Next came a saddle of mutton, or a joint of roast beef, and for the fourth course came fowls, tongue, and ham. French dishes were placed on the side-board, but for a long time such weak culinary preparations were treated with contemptuous neglect. The boiled potato was then very popular, and vegetables generally were unaccompanied with sauce. The dessert, which was ordered from the confectioner's, was often very costly. The wines used at dinner were chiefly port, sherry, and hock. "A perpetual thirst seemed to come over people, both men and women," says Captain Gronow, "as soon as they had tasted their soup, as from that moment everybody was taking wine with everybody else till the close of the dinner, and such wine as produced that class of cordiality which frequently wanders into stupefaction. How this sort of eating and drinking ended was obvious from the prevalence of gout; and the necessity of every one making the pill-box a constant bed-room companion."

There was a sort of understanding in those times that Hyde Park was the peculiar preserve of the aristocracy. Women of notoriously bad reputation would not then have dared to show themselves in Rotten Row, and the middle and lower classes of London did not think of intruding themselves as equestrians upon the pleasure-ground of the nobility. At that time it was every-way more retired; the walks were fewer, and cows and deer were seen quietly grazing under clumps of trees. The frequenters of the park, who then congregated daily about five o'clock, were chiefly composed of dandies and ladies in the best society; the former, well-mounted and dressed in a blue coat, with brass buttons, leather-breeches and top-boots, with a tremendously deep, stiff, white cravat, and high shirt-collar, which rendered stooping impossible. Many of the ladies used to drive round the park in a carriage, called a *vis-à-vis*, which held only two persons, having a hammercloth rich in heraldic designs—powdered footmen in smart liveries, and a coachman who assumed all the airs and importance of a wigged archbishop.

The growing importance of the middle classes, the rapid multiplication of men of wealth and high social position in the mercantile community; the marriage of their daughters into noble families rendered insolvent by extravagance, and the diffusion of knowledge among all classes of the community, gradually levelled or lowered the barriers of exclusiveness, increased the facilities of social intercourse, and rendered the fashions in the clothing of both sexes more accordant with good taste, more convenient, and more

conducive to health. With the use of the trowsers, and Hessian or Wellington boots, came the loose and easy sur-tout, and frock-coat; and instead of the deep stiff white cravat, black stocks or black ties were worn, except in full dress at evening parties. The clergy, however, retained the white neckcloth, and, strange to say, it also became the necessary distinction of footmen, butlers, hotel-waiters, and shop-assistants. The old court dress coat, with its bag-like skirt, was abandoned by gentlemen who attended dinner parties and balls for the swallow-tailed "dress coat."

The style of ladies' dresses in the days of George IV. forms a striking contrast to the fashions of the present day. The ordinary walking dresses were made loosely and simply—not high to the throat, as in the present day, nor

the most ugly and uncouth part of the dress, and the most irreconcilable to modern ideas of taste, was the bonnet which the mothers and grandmothers of the present generation wore. The crown was in itself large enough for a modern hat of reasonable proportions; and from it, the leaf grew out, expanding round the face, in shape somewhat like a coal-scuttle, and trimmed elaborately with feathers and flowers.

Towards the end of the following reign the style of ladies' dress suddenly changed. The unshapely short-waisted robe was succeeded by one of ampler dimensions, longer and fuller, with a moderate amount of crinoline—enough to give dignity and grace to the figure, but not expanding to the same extent as the present fashion—and long pointed stomachers. The bonnets were considerably



WALKING DRESSES IN 1817 AND 1842.



EVENING DRESSES IN 1817 AND 1842.

yet low; the waist, with utter disregard to its natural length, portioned off by a belt coming almost immediately under the arms, from which descended a long, straight, ungraceful skirt, without any undulation or fulness whatever, reaching to the feet, but short enough to leave them visible. The sleeves were plain and close to the arms, fastened at the wrist with a frill. The same scantiness of material, and absence of crinoline was observed in the evening dresses; they wore low bodies and short sleeves, with long gloves reaching to the elbow. The trimmings varied according to the taste of the wearer, as in our own day. Small flowers at the bottom of the skirt seem to have been the prevailing style. The hair was generally arranged in short curls round the face; but this was also subject to variations, of course, and some wore it plaited. The head-dress was composed of a bouquet of flowers placed on the top of the head. But

reduced in size, but still continued larger than they are worn now. The ball dresses at the beginning of the present reign were very much like those of our own day, except that they were then made of heavy, rich materials—silk, satin, brocade, &c., and now they are generally composed of gauzy gossamer stuff, which gives a light, airy appearance to the figure. The style of the sleeve varied, but one of the fashions at this time was a puffing at the shoulder, and sloping gradually down, commonly called the "leg-of-mutton sleeve." The cloaks were large and full, enveloping the whole figure, and reaching almost to the ground. Since then the fashions have not undergone any very material alterations, except those little variations in minor details which every recurring season brings, and which it would be quite beneath the dignity of history to record.

CHAPTER XL.

Accession of Queen Victoria—The Queen's Address to the Privy Council—The King of Hanover—Lord Melbourne and the Queen—Lord Brougham's Speech—The Civil List—The Queen's first Speech to the Parliament—The General Election—The Queen at the Lord Mayor's Banquet—The New Parliament—Rebellion in Lower Canada—America sympathises with the Insurgents—Lord Durham Lord High Commissioner; His Difficulties and Mistakes; His Ordinance; Disallowed by Parliament; His Resignation—Lord Durham's Report on the North American Colonies—The Colonial Question—Sir William Molesworth—Wisdom of Lord Durham's Policy—Renewal of the Insurrection—American Sympathisers—American Government—Mr. Roebuck—The

especially one so young, had a charm for all classes in society. The superior gifts and the amiable disposition of the Princess, the care with which she had been educated by her excellent mother, and all that had been known of her private life and her favourite pursuits, prepared the nation to hail her accession with sincere acclamations. There was something which could not fail to excite the imagination and touch the heart, in seeing one who in a private station would be regarded as a mere girl, just old enough to come out into society,



HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

New Canadian Constitution—Advantages of Self-government—Introduction of the Irish Poor Relief Bill—Opposition of Mr. O'Connell—Pauperism in Holland and Belgium—Workhouse at Amsterdam—The Belgian Peasantry contrasted with those of Ireland—The Bill in the Lords—Alarm of the Irish Peers—The Bill passes and receives the Royal Assent—Organisation and Working of the System.

A COMBINATION of circumstances invested the accession of the Princess Victoria with peculiar interest. She was the third female sovereign called to occupy the throne of these realms since the Reformation; and like those of Elizabeth and Anne, her reign has served to mark an era in British history. The novelty of a female sovereign,

called upon to assume the sceptre of the greatest empire in the world, and to sit upon one of its oldest thrones, receiving the willing homage of statesmen and warriors who had been historic characters for half a century. We are not surprised, therefore, to read that the mingled majesty and grace with which she assumed her high functions excited universal admiration, and "drew tears from many eyes which had not been wet for half a lifetime;" and that warriors trembled with emotion, who had never known fear in the presence of the enemy. Loyalty in this case was refined and elevated, and be-

came a thrilling sentiment of tender devotion, akin to the homage which might be supposed to be paid to a superior being.

When the ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance had been gone through, Her Majesty thus addressed the Privy Council:—"The severe and afflicting loss which the nation has sustained by the death of His Majesty, my beloved uncle, has devolved upon me the duty of administering the government of this empire. This awful responsibility is imposed upon me so suddenly, and at so early a period of my life, that I should feel myself utterly oppressed by the burden, were I not sustained by the hope that Divine Providence, which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it; and that I shall find in the purity of my intentions, and in my zeal for the public welfare, that support and those resources which usually belong to a more mature age and to long experience. I place my firm reliance upon the wisdom of Parliament, and upon the loyalty and affection of my people. I esteem it also a peculiar advantage that I succeed to a sovereign whose constant regard for the rights and liberties of his subjects, and whose desire to promote the amelioration of the laws and institutions of this country, have rendered his name the object of general attachment and veneration. Educated in England, under the tender and enlightened care of a most affectionate mother, I have learned from my infancy to respect and love the constitution of my native country. It will be my unceasing study to maintain the reformed religion, as by law established, securing at the same time to all the full enjoyment of religious liberty. And I shall steadily protect the rights, and promote, to the utmost of my power, the happiness and welfare of all classes of my subjects."

The scene was thus described by Mr. Disraeli:—"The prelates and chief men of her realm then advanced to the throne, and kneeling before her, pledged their troth, and took the sacred oath of allegiance and supremacy—allegiance to one who rules over the land that the great Macedonian could not conquer, and over a continent of which even Columbus never dreamed; to the queen of every sea, and of nations of every zone. Fair and serene, she has the blood and beauty of the Saxon. Will it be her proud destiny, at length, to bear relief to suffering millions, and with that soft hand, which might inspire troubadour and guerdon knights, break the last link in Saxon thralldom?"

The young Queen enjoyed, in the new King of Hanover, the advantage of a foil which, with all the force of contrast, placed her character as a constitutional sovereign in the best possible light. At her accession the crown of Hanover, which could not be inherited by a female, was separated from the crown of England, with which it had been united since the accession of George I. in 1712, and which had descended to the Duke of Cumberland, the next surviving male heir of George III. This severance, instead of being regarded as a loss, was really felt as a great relief by the English nation, not only as terminating its connection with German politics, from which nothing but annoyance and expense could result, but,

what was regarded as much more important, freeing the country from the presence of the Duke of Cumberland, who was at once detested for his arbitrary temper and for the conspiracy which had for its object his usurpation of the throne of these realms. On the 24th of June, Ernest Augustus, King of Hanover, left London, apparently in a very churlish spirit, and breathing hostility to constitutional freedom in the country which was to be cursed by his rule. So strong were his feelings against constitutional government, that he had not the grace to receive a deputation of the Chambers, who came to offer him their homage and their congratulations; and on the 5th of July he hastened to issue a proclamation, announcing his intention to abolish the constitution. He not only did this, but he ejected from their offices, and banished from their country, some of the most eminent professors in the University of Göttingen. It was thus he inaugurated a rule of iron despotism, worse than that of the native princes, who had not the advantage of being brought up in a free country.

The Queen did not disturb the administration which she found in office. It was constituted as follows:—Cabinet—Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord President of the Council; Lord Cottenham, Lord High Chancellor; Viscount Duncannon, Lord Privy Seal and First Commissioner of Land Revenue; Viscount Melbourne, First Lord of the Treasury; Right Hon. T. Spring Rice, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Earl of Minto, First Lord of the Admiralty; Lord John Russell, Secretary of State for the Home Department; Viscount Palmerston, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; Lord Glenelg, Secretary of State for the Colonies; Sir John Cam Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control; Lord Holland, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; Right Hon. C. P. Thomson, President of the Board of Trade; Viscount Howick, Secretary at War. Not of the Cabinet—Earl of Lichfield, Postmaster-General; Right Hon. Henry Labouchere, Master of the Mint and Vice-President of the Board of Trade; Sir John Parnell, Paymaster-General of the Forces; Right Hon. Sir B. H. Vivian, Bart., Clerk of the Ordnance; Sir John Campbell, Attorney-General; Sir R. M. Rolfe, Solicitor-General. Great Officers of State—Duke of Argyll, Lord Steward; Marquis of Conyngham, Lord Chamberlain; Earl of Albemarle, Master of the Horse. Ireland—Earl of Mulgrave, Lord Lieutenant; Lord Plunkett, Lord High Chancellor; Viscount Morpeth, Chief Secretary. Scotland—Right Hon. John A. Murray, Lord Advocate; Andrew Rutherford, Esq., Solicitor-General.

The Premier, who was now fifty-eight years old, had had much experience of public life. He had been Chief Secretary for Ireland; Home Secretary, and Prime Minister, to which position he had been called the second time, after the failure of Sir Robert Peel's administration in the spring of 1835. The young Queen seems to have looked to his counsel with a sort of filial deference; and from the time of her accession to the close of his career, he devoted himself to the important task of instructing and guiding his royal mistress in the

discharge of her various official duties—a task of great delicacy, which he performed with so much ability and success, as not only to win her gratitude, but to secure also the approbation of the country, and to disarm the hostility of political opponents. No royal pupil, it may be safely said, ever did more credit to a mentor than did Queen Victoria. There is not one of her subjects at the present day who will not admit that after a reign of twenty-six years Her Majesty has more than realised the anticipations which were eloquently expressed by Lord Brougham in his speech on the Civil List. He said:—“Not any one among you all can rejoice more sincerely than I have done in the enthusiasm of affection which has burst from all her subjects to greet the accession of the reigning monarch. They have generously let anticipation usurp the place of gratitude. They have taken counsel with hope, rather than experience. For as memory scatters her sweets with a cold and churlish hand, it has been found more pleasing to array the object of the general love in the attire of fancy; and as fervent a devotion has been kindled towards the yet untried ruler, as could have glowed in her people's bosom after the longest and most glorious reign, in which she should have only lived and only governed for the country's good; by some chronic miracle escaping all error and all failure, and only showering down blessings upon mankind. I heartily rejoice in this enthusiasm. I do not complain of it as premature. I rejoice in it because it must prove delightful to the royal object of it. I rejoice still more because I know that it will stimulate the Queen to live for her country, in order to earn the affections which have already been bestowed, and justify the opinion which has been formed, and is so fondly cherished upon trust. But most chiefly do I rejoice, because it extinguishes for ever all apprehensions of the English people's loyalty and trustworthiness; puts to shame all who would represent them as disaffected towards monarchical institutions; demonstrates the safety of entrusting them with an ample measure of political rights; and teaches to statesmen this great practical lesson, that the more we extirpate abuse from our system, the more searching we make our reforms, the more we endear the constitution to the people by making them feel its benefits, the safer will be the just rights of the monarch who is at its head, and the stronger will be the allegiance of the subject who cheerfully obeys.”

Prior to the revolution, the sums voted for the Civil List were granted without any specification as to whether they should be applied to the maintenance of the army, the navy, the civil government, or the household. The king got a lump sum, for carrying on the government, defending the country, and supporting the royal dignity; and was allowed to apportion it according to his own discretion—the plan most agreeable to an arbitrary monarch. After the revolution, the expenses of the army and navy were separately voted, and the charges for civil government have been gradually removed from the Civil List. At the accession of William IV. these charges were reduced to the amount required for the expenses of the

royal household, by the removal of the salaries of the judges, the ambassadors, and the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, together with a number of Civil List pensions. This fact should be borne in mind in connection with the sums on the civil list of former sovereigns. For example: William III., Anne, and George I. had £700,000 a year; George II. and George III., £800,000; George IV., £850,000; William IV., £500,000; Queen Victoria received £385,000. The application was thus limited: Privy purse, £60,000; household salaries and retired allowances, £131,260; household expenses, £172,500; royal bounty, alms, and special services, £13,200; leaving an unappropriated balance of upwards of £8,000 to be employed in supplementing any of the other charges, or in any way Her Majesty thought proper. Economists grumbled about the magnitude of these allowances, and Lord Melbourne was accused of being over-indulgent to the youthful sovereign; but her immense popularity silenced all murmurers, and the nation felt happy to give her any amount of money she required.

On the 17th of July—a week after the burial of the King—the Queen went in state to meet Parliament. She was received along the line of procession with extraordinary enthusiasm; and never on the accession of a sovereign was the House of Peers so thronged by ladies of rank. A tone of kindness, mercy, and conciliation, befitting her youth and sex, marked her first speech from the throne. She stated that she regarded with peculiar interest the measures that had been brought to maturity for the mitigation of the criminal code, and the reduction of the number of capital punishments; promised that it should be her care to strengthen our institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, by discreet improvement, wherever improvement was required, and to do all in her power to compose and allay animosity and discord. Immediately on the delivery of the royal speech, Parliament was prorogued, in order to its dissolution. The general elections speedily followed, and were all over early in August. The ministerial candidates were accused of making an unconstitutional use of the Queen's name in their addresses, and availing themselves of her popularity to strengthen the position of the Government, and the Conservatives asserted that the Queen had no partiality for her present advisers, whom she found in office, and bore with only till Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues would feel strong enough to take their places.

On the 9th November the Queen honoured the City with her presence at the Lord Mayor's banquet, which was one of the most costly displays of civic magnificence on record. Business was suspended in London, the streets along the line of procession were crowded to excess, the windows of the houses were thronged with fair spectators, and it was evident that all the unpleasant associations connected with royalty which had been created during the last two reigns, were now completely obliterated by the presence of the Queen, from whose accession the monarchy seemed to have gained a new lease of existence.

The Parliament met on the 15th November, when Mr. Alberton was unanimously re-elected Speaker. On the 20th, the Queen opened the new Parliament in person. In the royal speech the serious attention of the Legislature was requested to the consideration of the state of the province of Lower Canada, which had now become a question so urgent, that it could not be any longer deferred. The demands of the *habitans* of that province were so extravagant that they were regarded by Sir Robert Peel as revolutionary. "Look," said he, "at the position of Lower Canada, commanding the entrance of the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and then ask if a population of half a million had a right to insist upon a measure which, in the heart of the British colonies of North America, would establish a French republic." They demanded, not only that the Executive Council should be responsible to the House of Representatives, but also that the Senate, or Upper House, then nominated by the Crown, should be elected by the people. The home Government, sustained by an overwhelming majority of the House of Commons, rejected the demand; and when the news reached Canada, the Lower Province was quickly in a flame of rebellion. Violent harangues were delivered to excited assemblies of armed men, who were called upon to imitate the glorious example of the United States, and break the yoke of English oppression. Papineau, the Canadian O'Connell, was the centre of a dramatic scene at St. Charles, in the county of Richelieu. He stood at the foot of a column, which was surmounted by a cap of liberty, where he was presented with an address by a monster meeting, composed of the "sons of liberty," who had marched in bands to the column, on which they placed their hands, and vowed eternal devotion to the service of their country. They also went in procession through the streets of Montreal, their leaders adopting all possible sorts of devices for exciting them to revolt; the discontented being encouraged, as may be easily supposed, by many warm sympathisers among the citizens of the United States. Fortunately, disaffection in the Upper Provinces was confined to a minority. The Loyalists held counter demonstrations at Montreal; regiments of volunteers to support the Government and maintain British connection were rapidly formed, and filled up by brave men, determined to lay down their lives for the fair young Queen who now demanded their allegiance. Sir Francis Head had so much confidence in the inhabitants of the Upper Provinces, that he sent all the regular troops into Lower Canada, for the purpose of suppressing the insurrection. A small force, under the command of Colonel Gore, encountered 1,500 of the rebels so strongly posted in stone houses in the villages of St. Denis and St. Charles, that they were obliged to retreat before the well-directed fire from the windows, with the loss of six killed and ten wounded, leaving their only field-piece behind. Among the wounded was Lieutenant Weir, who was barbarously murdered by the insurgents. At St. Charles, Colonel Wetherall, at the head of another detachment, stormed the stronghold of the rebels, and completely routed them, after an obsti-

nate resistance, and with a loss of only three killed and eighteen wounded. The village was burned, and the news of the decisive success of the troops so alarmed the rebels at St. Denis, that they precipitately fled, the leaders escaping into the United States. The strength of the insurgents, however, lay in the country of the Two Mountains, where they were pursued by Sir John Colborne in person, with a force of 18,000 men, including volunteers. Many of them took to flight at his approach, including their commander Girod, who, on being pursued and captured, shot himself. But 400 rebels, commanded by Dr. Chenier, took up a position in a church and some other buildings, around which they erected barricades, and there made a desperate resistance for two hours. Their defences were soon demolished by the artillery, the buildings were set on fire, and they were driven by the flames upon the points of the British bayonets, when 100 of those brave fellows were killed, and 120 taken prisoners. Next day the British troops proceeded to another stronghold of the rebels, St. Benoit, which they found abandoned, and to which the exasperated loyalists set fire. "Thus," wrote Lord Gosford, "have the measures adopted for putting down this ruthless revolt been crowned with success. Wherever an armed body has shown itself, it has been completely dispersed; the principal leaders and instigators have been killed, taken, or forced into exile; there is no longer a head, or concert, or organisation. Among the deluded and betrayed *habitans*, all the newspaper organs of revolution in the provinces, the *Vindicie*, *Minerve*, and *Liberale*, are no longer in existence, having ceased to appear in the commencement of the trouble; and in the short space of a month, a rebellion which at first wore so threatening an aspect has, with much less loss of life than could have been expected, been effectually put down." Papineau, the leader of the insurrection, had escaped to New York.

Sir Francis Head had made a somewhat dangerous experiment in denuding Upper Canada of troops, conceiving it to be his duty to lay before the American people the incontrovertible fact that, by the removal of Her Majesty's forces, and by the surrender of 600 stand of arms to the civil authorities, the people of Upper Canada had virtually been granted an opportunity of revolting; consequently, as the British constitution had been protected solely by the sovereign will of the people, it became, even by the greatest of all republican maxims, the only law of the land. This was not done, however, without an attempt at revolt, made chiefly by Irish Roman Catholics. The leader of this movement was W. L. Mackenzie, the editor of a newspaper, who issued a proclamation, calling upon the people to take up arms, if they loved freedom, and wished for perpetual peace, and "a government, founded upon the eternal heaven-born principles of the Lord Jesus Christ," exhorting them to "put down the villains" who oppressed and enslaved the country, as they would put down thieves and murderers. On the night of the 3rd December, 1837, this leader marched at the head of 500 rebels, from Mont-

gomery's Tavern, his head-quarters, upon Toronto, having initiated the war by the murder of Colonel Moodie. When they approached, the Governor was in bed and asleep. Hurriedly dressing, and spreading the alarm as he went, he hastened to the Town-hall, where the arms were deposited, and which were very near falling into the hands of the rebels. The first man he met was the Chief Justice, with a musket on his shoulder. In a few minutes as many loyalists had arrived as were sufficient to make a formidable show at the windows of the Town-hall and of the adjoining houses, which led the insurgents to believe that the place was occupied by a much larger force. They accordingly hesitated to attack, and retired from the place, committing various outrages on their way, such as robbing mails, and setting fire to houses. In the meantime, dispatches were sent to Colonel Allan M'Nab, who then commanded the militia, while the "fery cross" was borne swiftly through the townships and parishes, calling forth a levy *en masse* of the loyal inhabitants, who rushed to the defence of the capital. This occurred on the 4th of December, and on the 7th Colonel M'Nab marched out and attacked the rebels at Montgomery's Tavern, where, all being armed with rifles, they were strongly posted. M'Nab's force, consisting of militiamen and volunteers, attacked them vigorously, and after a brave resistance, drove them out of the building at the point of the bayonet. Mackenzie fled in disguise to Buffalo, in New York; a large number of the rebels were taken prisoners, but almost immediately released, and sent to their homes. The most extraordinary thing connected with this event was that the loyalists did not lose a single man.

It was on this occasion that the loyalty of the British settlers in Upper Canada shone forth with the most chivalrous devotion to the throne of the Queen. The moment the news arrived of Mackenzie's attack upon Toronto, the militia everywhere seized their arms, mustered in companies, and from Niagara, Gore, Lake Shireve, and many other places, set out on their march in the deep snow in the depth of winter. They waited for no call from the Government. It was enough for them to know that rebels were in arms against their Sovereign, and that their services might be necessary. The Scotch Highlanders from Glengarry mustered 900 strong, and had marched 100 miles through the snow, carrying their arms and provisions, when they received intelligence that the insurrection was put down. So great was the excitement, so enthusiastic the loyalty, that in three days 10,000 armed volunteers had assembled at Toronto. There was, however, no further occasion for their services in that place, and even the scattered remnants of the insurrection would have been extinguished but for the interference of filibustering citizens of the United States, who were then called "sympathisers," and who had assembled in considerable numbers along the Niagara river. They issued proclamations in the name of the Provisional Government, offering 100 dollars and 300 acres of the best land in Canada to every one who would join the Republicans.

They declared that there were ten millions of acres of fertile land at their disposal, with other vast resources of a country more extensive and rich in natural treasures than the United Kingdom or old France. They had established their head-quarters on Navy Island in the Niagara River, about two miles above the falls, having taken possession of it on the 13th of December, and made it their chief depôt of arms and provisions, the latter of which they brought from the American shore by means of a small steamer called the *Caroline*. They had one gun, which they employed in cannonading Chippawa, about 600 yards distant on the British side. Colonel M'Nab resolved to destroy the *Caroline*, and to root out the nest of pirates by which she was employed. On the 28th of December a party of militia found her moored opposite Fort Schlosser, on the American side, strongly guarded by bodies of armed men, both on board and on shore. Lieutenant Drew commanded the British party, and after a fierce conflict the vessel was boarded and captured, a number of those who manned her being taken prisoners. These being removed, the British set the vessel on fire, and the flaming mass was swept down the rapids, and precipitated into the unfathomable abyss below. According to the American version of this affair, the British had made an unprovoked and most wanton attack upon an unarmed vessel belonging to a neighbouring state, on American territory, at a time of profound peace; and though the vessel was filled with a helpless crowd of innocent women and children, it was set on fire with its living human cargo, which was hurled with horrifying shrieks over the Falls of Niagara. It is easy to imagine the indignation excited throughout the States by the announcement of this awful catastrophe in the newspapers. The truth came out by degrees, and the American President, Vanburen, issued a proclamation on the 5th of January, 1838, warning all citizens of the United States that if they interfered in any unlawful manner with the affairs of the neighbouring British provinces, they would render themselves liable to arrest and punishment.

Such was the state of things in Canada which the Imperial Parliament was called upon to consider in the spring of 1838. The first feeling which the news of the insurrection produced in England was one of alarm; the next was that all the forces that could be spared should be immediately dispatched for the purpose of crushing the revolt; and a ship of the line was employed for the first time in carrying a battalion of 800 Guards across the Atlantic. The Duke of Wellington censured the Government for not having had a sufficient military force to preserve the peace in Canada, and used the oft-repeated expression, that a great nation cannot make a little war.

On the 22nd of January Lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in a bill suspending the constitution in Lower Canada, and providing for the future government of that province, with a view to effecting a satisfactory settlement of the affairs of the colony. He stated that Her Majesty's Government had resolved to send out an experienced statesman, of high character and position,

and of well-known popular sympathies, with ample powers, and that Lord Durham had been selected for the purpose, and had consented to go. That noble lord himself stated that he accepted the onerous charge with inexpressible reluctance; and that he felt that "he could accomplish it only by the cordial and energetic support of his noble friends, the members of Her Majesty's Cabinet, by the co-operation of the Imperial Parliament, and the generous forbearance of the noble lords opposite to whom he had been always politically opposed." He went, he said, in the first place, to restore the supremacy of the law, and next, to be the humble instrument in conferring upon the British North American provinces such a free and liberal constitution as should place them on the same scale of independence as the rest of the possessions of Great Britain. The Government measure was carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 262 to 16, and unanimously in the House of Lords.

The Lord High Commissioner immediately proceeded on his great mission, and after a tedious voyage landed at Quebec on the 29th of May. He took with him, as his private secretary, Mr. Charles Buller, a man of singular ability, an ardent friend of free institutions, gifted with a large mind and generous sympathies, and a spirit that rose superior to all party considerations. Two more suitable men could scarcely have been found for such a work. But they were destined to encounter difficulties at the very threshold, which embittered everything to the mind of Lord Durham, broke down his health and spirits, and hastened his early death. He found on his arrival 116 state prisoners, whose trial had been postponed, awaiting his instructions. How were they to be dealt with? It was quite certain, from cases that had already occurred, that they would not be convicted by any jury in Lower Canada, no matter how strong the evidence against them. The greater their guilt in the eye of the law, the greater would be their merit in the eyes of the jury. Were they to be tried by court martial? That was a course savouring of despotism, to which Lord Durham was perhaps the more averse from the fact that his powers were so unlimited. The Colonial Government had shown itself very lenient in liberating hundreds of prisoners on the spot, without any punishment. Most of those detained were charged with being the chief promoters of the rebellion, who, if let loose on the country, would in all probability renew their dangerous agitation, with the feeling that the Government was either unable or unwilling to punish treason. Was there any other alternative but a general amnesty, or trial before the ordinary tribunals, in a country where, to adopt the words of Lord Durham, "trial by jury existed only to defeat the ends of justice, and provoke the righteous scorn and indignation of the community?" Yes; they might be tried by a packed jury, or they might be banished without any trial at all, as they were taken in the very act of rebellion. From the former, the honest nature of Lord Durham revolted; the latter was the course adopted. On the 28th of June the Lord High

Commissioner published an ordinance, in which it was stated that Wolfred Nelson, and seven other persons therein named, had acknowledged their guilt, and submitted themselves to Her Majesty's pleasure; that Papineau, with fifteen others, had absconded. The former were sentenced to be transported to Bermuda during pleasure, there to be submitted to such restraints as might be thought fit; the latter, if they should return to Canada, were to be put to death without further trial. In each of these cases an unfortunate error was committed. The Lord High Commissioner had no legal authority out of Canada, and could not order the detention of any one at Bermuda; and to doom men to be put to death without further trial, was denounced in Parliament, by Lord Brougham and others, as unconstitutional. Lord Brougham described it as "an appalling fact." Such a proceeding, he said, was "contrary to every principle of justice, and was opposed to the genius and spirit of English law, which humanely supposed every accused party to be innocent until he was proved to be guilty." His reasons for the course he had adopted were given by Lord Durham, in a despatch to the Home Secretary, dated June 29th. The British party, he said, did not require sanguinary punishment; but they desired *security for the future*, and the certainty that the returning tranquillity of the province would not be arrested by the machinations of the ringleaders of rebellion, either there or in the United States. He said: "I did not think it right to transport these persons to a convict colony, for two reasons; first, because it was affixing a character of moral infamy on their acts, which public opinion did not sanction; and, secondly, because I hold it to be impolitic to force on the colony itself persons who would be looked on in the light of political martyrs, and thus acquire perhaps a degree of influence, which might be applied to evil uses, in a community composed of such dangerous elements."

The ordinance was disallowed at home. Lord Melbourne's cabinet depended for its existence on the Irish Roman Catholic members; and they sympathised with their brethren in Lower Canada. "The Tories," says Sir Archibald Alison, "exasperated by the loss of office, and the retention of it by their opponents, when they could only command so small a majority, eagerly laid hold of any slip in administration to drive ministers into a minority, and compel them to resign. Lord Brougham, who had never forgiven his former colleagues the constitution of the cabinet without his forming a part of it, signalled himself by the extreme bitterness with which he headed the onslaught. Lord Durham, in the hour of his need, was far from experiencing either the 'cordial and sincere support of his noble friends in the cabinet,' or 'the generous forbearance of the noble lords opposite,' on which he had relied when he set out on his arduous mission. The result was that, after protracted debates in both Houses of Parliament, which occupied the whole of the summer, and fill up nearly 500 pages of the Parliamentary Proceedings, the ordinance was annulled by Act of Parliament; but an Act was passed indemnifying Lord



LORD MELBOURNE INSTRUCTING THE YOUNG QUEEN.

Durham and the Canadian authorities. The majority in the Commons was so large that the opposition did not venture on a division; and in the Lords the disallowance was carried by a majority of 54 to 36."

This result occurred on the 10th of August, and Lord Durham saw the astounding news first in the American newspapers. Lords Melbourne and Glenelg softened the matter to him as well as they could; the former communicated the intelligence with the greatest regret and the deepest apprehension as to its consequences. Lord Durham betrayed his mortification unwisely in a proclamation which he immediately issued. As the banishment was an exception to the general amnesty he had published, he informed the prisoners at Bermuda that Her Majesty, being advised to refuse her assent to the exceptions, the amnesty existed without qualification, and added—"No impediment, therefore, exists to the return of the persons who have made the most distinctive admission of guilt, or have been excluded by me from the province on account of the danger to which it would be exposed by their presence."

Lord Durham at once resigned, and was succeeded by Mr. Poulett Thomson, afterwards Lord Sydenham, who fully adopted his enlightened policy, which was ably expounded in an important report, said to be from the pen of Mr. Charles Buller. It was characterised by profound statesmanship, and was the basis of the sound policy which has made united Canada a great and flourishing state. Sir William Molesworth, a philosophic statesman, who wrote much of colonial questions, had strongly advocated the abandonment of our American colonies, and contended that the advantages of an amicable separation between the two countries would be great. He thought that their proximity to the United States would always make them a source of weakness, the central government of the Union not being able to control the action of American citizens in spreading disaffection. He was correct enough in his views so far as the Union is concerned, but greatly miscalculated the effect of American sympathy upon Canadian loyalty, when he said, "How powerful soever the central government of the United States may be when it goes along with the wishes of the people, it is most feeble when the people are opposed or indifferent to its commands, or when one or more of the sovereign states are desirous of evading its decrees. How anxious soever it may be, from general views of policy, to prevent all interference with the affairs of Canada—all hostilities with this country—yet its people will see in this struggle but a repetition of their own glorious struggle for independence; they will behold in the conduct of England towards Canada the sequel of those despotic and unjust principles which, a little more than half a century ago, caused them to shake off our yoke." Lord Durham and Mr. Buller differed from Sir W. Molesworth in their view of the colonial question. The former considered that the "experiment of keeping colonies and governing them well ought at least to have a fair trial ere we abandon for ever the vast dominions which might supply the wants of our surplus population, and raise

up millions of fresh consumers of our manufactures and of producers of a supply for our wants. The warmest admirers and the strongest opponents of republican institutions, admit or assert that the amazing prosperity of the United States is less owing to their form of government than to the unlimited supply of fertile land, which maintains succeeding generations in an undiminished affluence of fertile soil. A region as large and as fertile," said Lord Durham, "is open to your majesty's subjects in your majesty's American dominions." Events have completely justified the policy advocated by him and fortunately adopted by the imperial government.

It would have been well if the home government and the parliament had not controlled and humiliated him in the fulfilment of his mission; for in respect to the rebellion the events which immediately followed his departure vindicated, at least, the prudence of his policy. He sailed from Quebec on the 1st of November; and the returned prisoners from Bermuda showed their sense of the leniency with which they had been treated by immediately re-organising the rebellion. Four hundred insurgents captured Mr. Ellis, a large landed proprietor, and carried him off as a hostage. A body of rebels had taken up a position at Lough-Na-Waga, an Indian village. The Indians were at church, but hearing of the presence of the insurgents, they immediately raised the war-whoop, attacked, and dispersed them, making seventy prisoners. Four thousand insurgents had assembled at Napier Ville, under the command of Wolfred Nelson, Dr. Cote, and others, but in a few days they retired, having issued a proclamation of independence, with a republican form of government, the confiscation of the crown lands and the clergy reserves, &c. In their retreat they attacked a much smaller body of loyalists, who had taken possession of the church of Odelle, but these brave men repulsed them, killing fifty and wounding twice that number. Sir John Colborne, the commander-in-chief, who had, on Lord Durham's departure, assumed provisionally the government of the colonies, bore witness, in his despatches, to the humane and creditable conduct of the insurgents; for, though they were at first 12,000 strong, and had Mr. Ellis and nearly 100 loyalists in their power for several days, no deeds of cruelty were perpetrated, and when the insurrection was suppressed, the prisoners were released, and shown the shortest way to rejoin their friends. The American sympathisers made an aggressive movement on the 12th of November, when a body of 500, with several pieces of artillery, crossed the St. Lawrence at Prescott, where they were attacked by three armed steamers, under Captain Sandon, R.N., and Colonel Young, and compelled to retire, when they took up their position in a stone house, from which they could not be dislodged till reinforcements came, with three or four guns under Dundas. After a sharp contest, the place was evacuated, the British having taken 159 prisoners, of whom 131 were Americans. Other attempts were made during the month of December by the "sympathisers," but they were all defeated, and before the end of the year hostilities were terminated;

not, however, without the loss of a number of valuable lives on both sides, which strikingly illustrated the fact that there is neither mercy nor humanity in undue leniency at the commencement of an insurrection. Vigorous action, and a stern execution of the law, may save the lives of hundreds, and prevent the horrors of a civil war. The government had now to deal with 753 political prisoners, who were British subjects. Of these only twelve of the principal offenders were ultimately brought to trial, of whom ten were sentenced to death, but only two, Cardinal and Duguette, were executed. The persons convicted of treason, or political felony, in Upper Canada, from the 1st of October, 1837, to the 1st of November, 1838, were disposed of as follows:—pardoned on giving security, 140; sentenced to confinement in penitentiary, 14; sentenced to banishment, 18; transported to Van Diemen's land, 27; escaped from Fort Henry, 12. The American prisoners had been sent to Kingston, and tried by court martial on the 24th of November. Four of them were sentenced to death, and executed, complaining of the deception that had been practised on them with regard to the strength of the anti-British party, and the prospects of the enterprise. Five others were subsequently found guilty and executed. The American government, though deprecating those executions on grounds of humanity, disclaimed all sanction or encouragement of such piratical invasions, and denied any desire on its part for the annexation of Canada.

Out of these troubles arose a new state of things, a new era of peace and prosperity. Lord Durham saw that disaffection and disturbance had arisen from the animosity of race and religion, exasperated by favoritism in the government, and the dispensation of patronage through "a family compact." He recommended a liberal, comprehensive, impartial, and unsectarian policy, with the union of the two provinces under one legislature. It was a revolution quite unexpected by both parties. The disaffected French Catholics feared, as the consequence of their defeat, a rule of military repression; the British Protestants hoped for the firm establishment of their ascendancy. Both were disappointed—the latter very painfully, when, notwithstanding their efforts and sacrifices for the maintenance of British power, they saw Papineau, the arch-traitor, whom they would have hanged, attorney-general in the new government. But Papineau was backed by a strong party of radical reformers in the House of Commons, and Mr. Roebuck, who acted as agent for the Canadians, was his ardent advocate. In one of his vehement speeches on the Canadian question, he said, "Sir, I am not one of those who have been in the habit of deserting a friend in need. In his most prosperous days I have thought myself honoured by the friendship of Mr. Papineau; and when I review the political career of that man, raised, as he has been, to eminence by the sole power of his intellect, without the employment of one single disgraceful proceeding, I look in vain through the whole of that career for one act which deserves reprobation. True it is that

he denounced, in strong language, the conduct of your colonial administration. I myself have equally condemned that administration. And if there be guilt in saying that Canada has been ill governed, that grievances have been left unredressed, that her oppressors are men ever cruel and now exasperated, I, sir, am willing to partake of that guilt. Talk to me of being frightened at being called a traitor, at being told that my life is forfeited, at the newspapers setting forth that I am to be sent to the Tower! The government organs and other portions of the press have endeavoured to excite the people against me, and to induce them to believe that I and my friends could desire that which England must view as dishonourable. Do you think that I am to be frightened by such petty warfare? If I be guilty, why are there not some who dare accuse me lawfully? My papers have been seized: let them be produced. I have not run away, because I know that there is a jury in England who will render justice to the accused."*

The new constitution was proclaimed in Canada on the 10th of February, 1841; and the admirable manner in which it has worked proves that Lord Durham, its author, was one of the greatest benefactors of the colony, as he had been of the mother country by his labours in bringing about the revolution embodied in the Reform Act. The contrast which he remarked and so well described between the two banks of the St. Lawrence, resulting from self-government on one side, and the want of it on the other, no longer exists. "The superiority," said he, "of the condition of our neighbours is perceivable throughout the whole extent of our North American territory. Even the ancient city of Montreal will not bear a comparison with Buffalo, a creation of yesterday. There is but one railroad in all British North America—that between Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence—and it is *only fifteen miles long*. The people on the frontier are poor and scattered, separated by vast forests, without towns or markets, and almost destitute of roads, living in mean houses, and with no apparent means of improving their condition. On the American side, on the other hand, all is activity and bustle. The forest has been widely cleared; every year numerous settlements are formed, and thousands of farms created out of the waste. The country is intersected by common roads; canals and rail-roads are finished or in the course of formation. The observer is surprised at the number of harbours on the lakes and the multitude of vessels they contain, while bridges, artificial landing-places, and commodious wharfs, are formed in all directions as soon as required. Good houses, mills, inns, warehouses, villages, towns, and even great cities, almost seem to spring out of the desert. Every village has its school-house and place of public worship; every town has many of both, with its township buildings, book-stores, and probably one or two banks, and newspapers; and the cities, with their fine churches, great hotels, great exchanges, court-houses,

and municipal halls of stone and marble, so new and fresh as to mark the recent existence of the forest where they now stand, would be admired in any part of the world."

This contrast between the effects of the two forms of government was almost sufficient to justify the insurrection; and upon the heads of the parties who resisted the reform of the old system of colonial misgovernment, rests much of the guilt involved in the destruction of life on both sides during the struggle.

On the 1st of December, shortly after the opening of Parliament, Lord John Russell introduced another question of great urgency—the relief of the Irish poor. After going through, and commenting on, the several recommendations of the Inquiry Commissioners, and noticing the objections to which they were all more or less open, he explained, by way of contrast, the principles on which the present bill was founded, much in the same manner that he had done on the first introduction of the measure. The statement was generally well received, although there were some marked exceptions in this respect; and the bill was read a first time without a division. It was, in like manner, read a second time on the 5th of February, 1838; but, on the motion for going into committee, on the 9th, Mr. O'Connell strongly opposed it, and moved that it be committed that day six months. The amendment was, however, negatived by 277 to 25, a majority which made the passing of the measure in some form pretty certain. On the 23rd of February, the question of settlement was again very fully discussed, and its introduction opposed by 103 to 31, the latter number comprising all that could be brought to vote for a settlement law of any kind. The vagrancy clauses were for the present withdrawn from the bill, on the understanding that there would hereafter be a separate measure for the suppression of mendicancy. The bill continued to be considered in successive committees until the 23rd of March, when, all the clauses having been gone through and settled, it was ordered to be reported, which was done on the 9th of April. On the 30th April the bill was read a third time and passed by the Commons, and on the day following was introduced and read a first time in the Lords.*

It was thought desirable that Mr. Nichols should proceed during the vacation to Holland and Belgium, with a view of ascertaining whether there was anything in the institutions of those countries that might be turned to account in constructing the Irish system. He was accompanied by Dr. Kay, now Sir James Kay Shuttleworth, then one of the Assistant Commissioners, who devoted his attention chiefly to education, on which he made an interesting report. With regard to a provision for the poor, they found little worthy of imitation. At Amsterdam the dirt and disorder of the day-rooms were very offensive. In these rooms the inmates took their meals, without any attention to regularity or propriety. Both men and boys were clothed in a coarse kind of

sacking; their chief article of diet was rye bread, almost black, and not over-abundant, with an indefinite quantity of boiled butter-milk. They were permitted to work at certain rates of wages, with which they purchased coffee, tobacco, gin, &c. On entering the day-room, the visitors beheld a motley scene. Some paupers were working at the looms, or at other occupations. Here, a group of men were seated at a table, playing cards; there, another group playing at draughts; and a third at hazard; while others were idly sauntering up and down the room. The women's day-room presented a scene of similar disorder. The Belgian workhouses were superior, in their internal arrangements, to those of Holland.

The visitors found that the condition of the peasantry and small farmers in Belgium presented a striking contrast to those of Ireland. In his report, Mr. Nichols said:—"Small farms of from five to ten acres abound in many parts of Belgium, closely resembling the small holdings in Ireland; but the Irish cultivator is without the comforts and conveniences of civilised life, whilst the Belgian peasant farmer enjoys a large portion of both. The houses of the small cultivators in Belgium are generally substantial, with a sleeping room in the attic, and closets for beds connected with the lower apartment, a dairy, a store for the grain, an oven, a cattle stall, piggery, and poultry loft. There is generally decent furniture and sufficient bedding, and, although the scrupulous cleanliness of the Dutch may not be everywhere observable, an air of comfort and propriety pervades the whole establishment. In the cow-house, the dung and urine are preserved in the tank, the ditches are scoured, the dry leaves, potato-tops, and offal of every kind are collected for manure, and heaps of compost are in course of preparation. The premises are kept in compact order, and a careful attention to economy is everywhere apparent. The family are decently clad, none are ragged or slovenly, although their dress may be of the coarsest material. The men universally wear the blouse, and wooden shoes are in common use by both sexes. Their diet consists chiefly of rye bread, milk, and potatoes. The contrast of what is here described with the state of the same class of persons in Ireland is very marked. Yet the productive powers of the soil in Belgium are certainly inferior to the general soil of Ireland, and the climate does not appear to be superior. To the soil and the climate, therefore, the Belgian does not owe his superiority in comfort and position over the Irish cultivator. The difference is rather owing to the greater industry, economy, and forethought of the people."

The bill was read a first time in the Lords on the 1st of May. Many of the peers, whose estates were heavily encumbered, were alarmed at the threatened imposition of a poor-rate, which might swallow up a large portion of their incomes. Those who were opposed to a poor law on economic principles, appealed to their lordships' fears, and excited a determined opposition against the measure. On the 21st of May there was a stormy debate of nine hours' duration. Lord Melbourne

* Nichols' "History of the Irish Poor Law," p. 210.

moved the second reading in a judicious speech, in which he skilfully employed the best arguments in favour of a legal provision for the poor, stating that this measure was, in fact, but the extension to Ireland of the English Act of 1834, with such alterations as were adopted to the peculiar circumstances of that country. It would suppress mendicancy, and would abate agrarian violence, while relieving the destitute in a way that would not paralyse the feeling of energy and self-reliance. Among the most violent opponents of the measure was Lord Lyndhurst, who declared that it would lead to a dissolution of the union. The Duke of Wellington, on the contrary, contended that the bill, if amended in committee, would improve the social relations of the people of Ireland, and would induce the gentry to pay some attention to their properties, and to the occupiers and labourers on their estates. He objected, however, to a law of settlement as leading to unbounded litigation and expense. Owing chiefly to the support of the Duke, the second reading was carried by a majority of 149 to 20. On the motion that the bill be committed, on the 28th of May, a scene of confusion and violence was presented, surpassing anything that could have been expected in such a dignified assembly. The Irish peers especially were in a state of extreme excitement. The discussion was adjourned to the 31st, and, after a debate of eight hours, the clause embodying the principle of the bill was adopted by a majority of 107 to 41. The bill was considered in committee on the 7th, 21st, 22nd, and 26th of June, and was read a third time on the 6th of July. It had now passed the Lords, altered, and in some respects improved; although, in the opinion of its author, the charge upon electoral divisions approximated too nearly to settlement to be quite satisfactory. It was not, however, till the 27th of July that the bill was ready for the royal assent, which was given on the 31st, and thus a law was at length established making provision for the systematic and efficient relief of destitution in Ireland.*

Armed with their Act of Parliament, the Poor Law Commissioners who had been appointed to carry it out, hastened to Ireland for the purpose of forming unions, providing workhouses, and making all the necessary arrangements. Mr. Nichols was accompanied by four Assistant Commissioners, Mr. Gulson, Mr. Earle, Mr. Hawley, and Mr. Voules. They assembled in Dublin on the 9th of October, where they were joined by four Irish Commissioners, namely:—Mr. Clements, Mr. Hancock, Mr. O'Donahue, and Dr. Phelan. The erection of workhouses was proceeded with without loss of time. Reports of the progress made were annually published, and in May, 1842, the whole of Ireland had been formed into 130 unions; all the workhouses were either built or in progress of building, and eighty-one had been declared fit for the reception of the destitute poor. Mr. Nichols left Ireland in 1842; his functions being delegated to a board consisting of Mr. Gulson and Mr. Power. It was almost providential circumstance

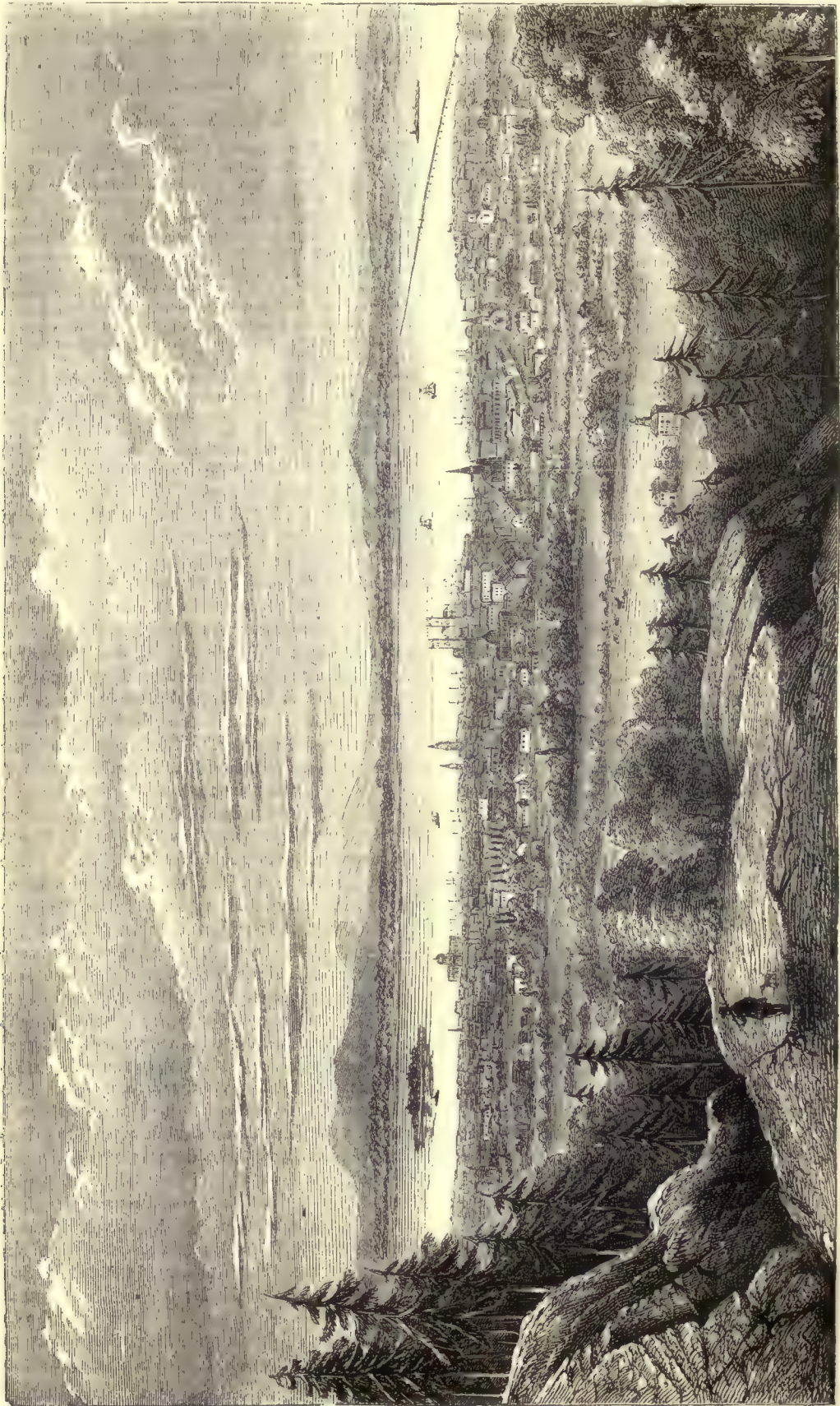
that the system had been brought into working order before the potato failure of 1846, as it contributed materially to mitigate the horrors of the famine.

CHAPTER .XLI.

Our Colonial Administration—Sir William Molesworth's Motion—Lord Palmerston's Defence of the Colonial Secretary—West Indian Slavery—The Slave Trade—Lord Brougham's Oration—Horrors of the Middle Passage—Negroes thrown Overboard—Lord Minton's Defence of Naval Officers—Portugal a Standing Nuisance on the Ocean—Iniquities of the Apprenticeship System in the West Indies—Eleven Females murdered by a Flogging and the Treadmill—Attempt to establish Slavery in British Guiana—Coolies—Lord Brougham's Resolutions on the Subject—The Roman Catholic Oath—Mr. O'Connell's Interpretation—The Bishop of Exeter—Lord Melbourne on Oaths of Office—The Pope's Disapproval of the Roman Catholic Oath—Conservative Banquet to Sir Robert Peel—His Exposition of his Policy—Irish Questions—The Church Establishment and the Corporations—Sir Thomas Acland's Resolution on the Appropriation Clause—Alleged Breach of Faith on the part of the Conservatives—Denied by Lord Stanley and Sir Robert Peel—Scene in the Commons—Settlement of the Irish Questions—Preparation for the Queen's Coronation—The Marquis of Londonderry—Earl Fitzwilliam—The Procession to Westminster Abbey—The Ceremonial—Return of the Procession—Public Festivities.

On the 6th March, Sir William Molesworth, with a view to bring the whole colonial administration of the empire before the House of Commons, moved that an address be presented to Her Majesty, expressing the opinion of the House that in the present critical state of many of her foreign possessions, "the colonial minister should be a person in whose diligence, activity, and firmness, the House and the public may be able to place reliance; and declaring that Her Majesty's present Secretary of State for the Colonies does not enjoy the confidence of the House or the country." The honourable baronet made a speech of two hours' duration, which was a dissertation on colonial policy, containing a survey of the whole of Her Majesty's dominions in both hemispheres. He disclaimed all party considerations in bringing forward his motion, or any intention to make an invidious attack on Lord Glenelg. But as the colonies were so numerous, so diversified in races, religions, languages, institutions, interests; and, as they were unrepresented in the Imperial Parliament, it was absolutely necessary that the colonial administration should be vigilant, prompt, sagacious, energetic, and firm. Lord Glenelg was wanting in those qualities, and the colonies were all suffering more or less from the errors and deficiencies of this ill-fated minister, "who had, in the words of Lord Aberdeen, reduced doing nothing to a system." Lord Glenelg was defended by Lord Palmerston, who regarded the attack upon him as an assault upon the cabinet, which would not allow one of its members to be made a scapegoat. He declared that Lord Glenelg's administration had produced satisfaction and contentment in the colonies, where formerly disaffection had prevailed. The effect of the motion, he said, would be the resignation of ministers; but were the Tories ready to take office in conjunction with the Radicals; or did the honourable baronet think that when they had triumphed, he and Sir Robert Peel would meet upon the field of victory and divide the spoil? In conclusion, he said he should meet

* Nichols' "History of the Irish Poor Law," p. 220.



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the motion by a simple negative. Lord Stanley was called up by some remarks of Mr. Labouchere, and caused laughter and cheers by a taunt against Lord Palmerston. He said he knew not whether his noble friend, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had any intention of forming part of the new Tory administration; but if he did not, he would perhaps allow him to say that for a much longer period than that to which his memory could go back, it would be the only administration which his noble friend had not joined.

Sir George Grey and the Chancellor of the Exchequer having spoken in defence of the Government, and re-

which referred to the affairs of Canada, thus offering a fair trial of strength between the two sides of the House. To this Sir William agreed; the amendment was put as a substantive motion: and the House divided, when the numbers were—ayes, 287; noes, 316; majority for ministers, 29.

The attention of Parliament was occupied during this session by another colonial question of wider and deeper interest affecting the coloured population in the West Indies. The anti-slavery agitation did not cease when the Emancipation Act was passed. The apprenticeship system, however good in theory, failed in practice. The



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taliated on the Conservatives, Sir Robert Peel rose, and delivered a sarcastic speech, remarking that ministers had, no doubt, been looking back, while suffering under the stripes they had received last week, when they had been defeated in four out of five divisions, seeking consolation in the records of other beatings, and the defeats of other governments. Lord John Russell replied to Sir Robert, and alluding to an amendment brought forward by Lord Sandon, remarked that "parties, like serpents, are moved by their tails." The noble lord concluded by suggesting to Sir W. Molesworth the expediency of withdrawing his motion, in order that the sense of the House might be taken upon the amendment

slaves were irritated because they had still to bear fragments of their chains; the masters, because restraints were put upon their power. On the one side, therefore, there was sullen disobedience; on the other, cruelty and violence. The colonial legislatures, composed of planters, were ill-conditioned and obstinate, full of resentment against the Home Government, and bitterly exasperated against the race that was contumaciously struggling to escape from their tyranny. Lord Brougham, being now out of office, and having little to occupy his active and energetic mind, fretted by inaction, took up the anti-slavery question with great earnestness. He opened the campaign on the 29th of January by presenting a

petition from Leeds, praying for the immediate abolition of negro slavery. The noble and learned lord took that opportunity of delivering a powerful oration on the enormities still committed in the slave trade. "That accursed traffic," he exclaimed, "flourishes under the very expedients adopted to crush it, and increases in consequence of those very measures resorted to for its extinction. When the act for abolishing the British slave trade passed in 1807, and when at a later period treaties were made with a view to extinguish the traffic carried on by France, Spain, and Portugal, the plan was adopted which was now in operation. The right of search and seizure was confined to certain vessels in the service of the state, and a promise of £5 head-money was held out as an inducement to quicken the activity of the officers and men, to be paid for each slave on board the captured ship over and above the proceeds of its sale upon condemnation. Now," said his lordship, "a little reflection might have sufficed to show that there was an inherent vice in this scheme, since an inducement was thereby offered to permit the principal part of the crime, namely, the shipping of slaves, for the sake of this head-money. And thus the policy which holds out a reward, not to the cruiser that stops a slave-ship, and interrupts the commission of the crime, but to the cruiser who seizes her on her way back, when full of slaves, gives an interest to the persons employed in the service to let her reach Africa, take in a cargo of slaves, and sail for America. Now," said Lord Brougham, "whether he succeeds in gaining the opposite shores, or is overtaken and condemned, let us see what the effect of this system is in the vessel's construction and accommodation. Let us see how the unavoidable miseries of the middle passage are exasperated by the contraband nature of the adventure—how the unavoidable mischief is aggravated by the means taken to extirpate it. Every consideration is sacrificed to the swiftness of sailing in the construction of the slave-ships, which are built so narrow as to put their safety in peril, being made just broad enough in the beam to keep the sea. What is the result to the slaves? Before the trade was put down by us in 1807, they had the benefit of what was termed the Slave-carrying Act, which gave the unhappy victims the benefit of a certain space between decks, in which they might breathe the tainted air more freely, and a certain supply of provisions and of water. But now there is nothing of the kind, and the slave is in the condition in which their debates found him above half a century ago, when the venerable Thomas Clarkson awakened the world to his sufferings. The scantiest portion which will support life is alone provided, and the wretched Africans are compressed and stowed away in every nook and cranny of the ship, as if they were dead goods concealed on board smuggling vessels. On being discovered, the slaver has to determine whether he will regain the port or will fare across the Atlantic, and so perfect his adventure and consummate his crime, reaching the American shores with a part at least of his lading. How many unutterable horrors," exclaimed Lord Brougham, "are em-

braced in the word that has slipped my tongue! Yes, yes; for no sooner does the miscreant find that the cruiser is gaining upon him than he bethinks him of lightening the ship, and casts overboard men, women, and children. Does he first knock off their fetters? No. Why? Because these irons by which they have been held together in couples for safety, are not screwed together and padlocked, so as to be removed in cases of danger from tempest or fire, but they are riveted—welded together by the blacksmith in his forge, never to be removed nor loosened until, after the horrors of the middle passage, the children of misery shall be landed to bondage in the civilised world. The irons, too, serve the purpose of weights; and, if time be allowed, more weights are added, to the end that the wretches may be entangled, to prevent their swimming. Nor is this all. Instances have been recorded of other precautions used for the same purpose. Water-casks have been filled with human beings, and one vessel threw twelve overboard thus laden. In one chase, two slave-ships endeavoured, but in vain, to make their escape, and in the attempt they flung into the sea 500 human beings, of all ages and either sex."

Lord Brougham showed that so far from our efforts materially checking it, the bulk of this infernal commerce was undiminished; and so safe was it that the insurance at the Havanna was no higher than $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to cover all hazards. Of this $4\frac{1}{2}$ was allowed for the usual sea risk, leaving but 8 for the chance of capture. In 1835 eighty slave ships sailed from the Havanna alone, and six of them brought back, on an average, about 360 each; so that about 28,000 were brought to that port in the year. In December of the same year between 4,000 and 5,000 were safely landed at Rio. One of these ships carried 570, another no less than 700 slaves. Of all the criminals engaged in these atrocities, Lord Brougham said, "the Brazilians, the Spaniards, and the Portuguese are the greatest—the three nations with which our commerce is the closest and our influence the most commanding;" and he called upon the Government and the House to compel those feeble states to abandon their nefarious traffic. It was admitted, both by the Colonial Secretary and the Duke of Wellington, that there was no exaggeration in those statements. Lord Minto denied, however, that British officers allowed vessels equipped for the slave trade to escape, in order to secure the head-money, and to wait at the mouths of rivers till the cargoes had been shipped. On the contrary, the only complaint he heard against them was that they were too ready to take those vessels, and too little careful of themselves, not attending sufficiently to their own security against prosecutions. Lord Brougham having asked whether there was any objection against the abolishing of head-money, and the substitution of a reward according to the tonnage of the vessel captured, Lords Ellenborough and Ashburton concurred in this view; but Lord Glenelg said there was no other way of rewarding the captors, except in the

case of vessels sailing under the flag of a nation with which we had a treaty, including the equipment article. He said the only nation that still thwarted the endeavours of this country to put down the trade was Portugal; and he could not conceal the fact that vessels under her flag were constantly guilty of violating, not only the laws of humanity, but the direct stipulations of the treaty. Lord Ashburton suggested that strong measures should be taken to compel Portugal to desist from being a standing nuisance on the ocean.

Again, on the 20th of February, Lord Brougham took up the subject of negro emancipation in the West Indies. In eloquent and glowing language he described the joy that had been excited by the Emancipation Act, the hopes which the negroes had cherished, and the cruel disappointments to which they had been subjected; contending that the slave-holders had not kept faith with this country, and that the condition of the negroes, instead of being improved, was, in many respects, worse than before. They were stinted in diet, the victims of partial tribunals, of excessive and illegal punishments. He selected one instance from the papers on the table of the House. Eleven females were flogged, and then put on the treadmill: when faint, and about to fall off, they were suspended by the arms, so that the wheel at each revolution bruised and galled their legs, till their sufferings had reached the extreme pitch which life can endure. In the course of a few days these wretched beings languished and died. A coroner's jury was empanelled; the verdict given, "Died by the visitation of God!"

In the colony of British Guiana there had been an old law which permitted the importation of labourers without distinction. In 1836 a law was passed by the Governor and Council which regulated the relations of such persons to their employers, restricting the term of bondage to seven years. This was sanctioned by an order in Council in 1837, but with several important alterations, with respect to servants from the West Indian colonies, in which slavery had been abolished, the introduction of labourers from Africa being entirely prohibited. An application was subsequently made to allow the importation of Hindoos, called "hill coolies," or highland labourers, to be bound for a period of seven years, as no shorter one, it was alleged, would pay the expense of importation. To this Lord Glenelg gave his consent on the 12th of July, 1837; and it appears that arrangements had been made during the winter for the deportation of coolies on an extensive scale. The vigilance of Lord Brougham detected in these proceedings a masked slave-trade, and he accordingly brought the subject before the House of Lords on the 6th of March, when he moved two resolutions in condemnation of the order in Council, introducing his motion by a masterly speech. He showed that 25,000 Africans had been imported into the Mauritius in defiance of the law, and he predicted that they were about to expose to the infernal traffic in human beings the entire Asiatic coast, "from Madagascar to the Red Sea—from the Arabian Gulf along Malabar to Travancore; thence from Cape

Comorin to the mouths of the Ganges, and of all the unknown and nameless streams that water the peninsula and flow into the Indian Ocean, while no precautions had been taken to secure proper ship's provision or accommodation for the labourers on their voyage." In conclusion, Lord Brougham exclaimed—"No, my lords, I could not slumber without seeing before me, in visions of the night, the great and good men who have passed away, seeming as if they could not taste their own repose until I should lend my feeble help, and stretch forth this hand to chase away the monstrous slave-trade from the light it once more outrages."

Lord Glenelg contended that Lord Brougham had exaggerated the danger, but the Duke of Wellington asserted that the law was quite inadequate to check the evil, and he proposed that the embarkation of the labourers should be superintended by a responsible person, who should go with them and protect them while on board and on their landing, and see to the due performance of their respective bargains, the nature of which should be clearly explained to them, and they should be at liberty to return if they did not like the service. Unless some such arrangements were adopted, he declared he would vote for Lord Brougham's resolutions. Lord Melbourne promised that Government would attend to the duke's suggestions. Lord Ellenborough, Lord Lyndhurst, and Lord Fitzgerald condemned the order in Council; but the Duke of Wellington having obtained a distinct assurance from Lord Melbourne that the labourers would be protected, moved the previous question, which was carried by a majority of 56 to 14.

The oath taken by Roman Catholic members of Parliament was the subject of discussion in the House of Lords in this session. It was introduced by the Bishop of Exeter on the 1st of March. The oath, it will be recollected, binds Roman Catholic members "to disclaim, and disavow, and solemnly abjure any attempt to subvert the present Church establishment as settled by law within this realm," and to swear solemnly that they "will never exercise any privilege," to which they may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion or Protestant Government in this kingdom; and that the words were used in the plain and ordinary sense, "without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatever." Mr. O'Connell interpreted this very stringent oath in this sense, "that the Roman Catholics were bound, as were the Protestants also, to support the establishment of the Church of England as long as it continued to be the law; but that as legislators they were quite competent to become parties to an alteration of the law, and that the temporalities of the Church were not essential to its character as an establishment." Both these positions are clearly fallacious, for the oath was meant expressly to restrain the action of Roman Catholics as legislators, and a Church establishment without temporalities would be like title-deeds to an estate that had no existence. The Bishop of Exeter delivered a powerful argument for the purpose of demonstrating that the Roman Catholic members had

violated their oath in their conduct with reference to the Irish Church establishment. Lord Melbourne, on the other hand, contended that Roman Catholics had a right to vote upon every question brought before Parliament, and if they did violate their oaths, he saw no remedy that could be resorted to; and he sensibly remarked that oaths are in themselves objectionable; they embarrass the minds of the weak, disturb the minds of the scrupulous, and cannot bind the consciences of the dishonest. "If the Establishment was in danger," he said, "oaths would not save it. The Protestant reformation was brought about in spite of oaths; and the Lord Chancellor, judges, magistrates, and municipal functionaries were in Henry V.'s time solemnly sworn to exterminate the Lollards." There is much truth in this observation, but the logical conclusion from the argument is, that the imposition of oaths of office is absurd and profane. An incident was referred to, however, by the Bishop of Exeter, on the 27th of March, which showed that the Court of Rome did not regard the Roman Catholic oath so lightly. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Malta refused to take it, when appointed a member of Council in 1835, until he obtained the sanction of the Pope, who decided that it could not be lawfully taken; and the Bishop of Exeter argued that as it was stamped by the Pope's disapproval, Roman Catholic members could not regard it as binding on their consciences.

A memorable event in the modern history of political parties occurred on the 12th of May. A banquet was given to Sir Robert Peel at the Merchant Taylors' Hall, at which 300 Conservative members of Parliament were actually present. The chair was occupied by the Marquis of Chandos, who described the assembly as "a body of gentlemen, perhaps the most influential in the country, united heart and hand to support the right hon. baronet, and who had invited him as their guest to receive publicly at their hands the full, unanimous, and enthusiastic approbation of his conduct in Parliament and elsewhere." The speech of Sir Robert Peel on this occasion was a luminous exposition of his policy as the Conservative leader. He stated that his object for some years past had been "to lay the foundations of a great party, which, existing in the House of Commons, and deriving its strength from the popular will, should diminish the risk and deaden the shock of collisions between the two deliberative branches of the legislature." He was aided in this work by the Duke of Wellington—"that man who is not without ambition, but without its alloys"—and by Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham, whose accession to the party resulted "not from negotiations, but the force of circumstances:" and concerning which Lord Stanley himself, the same evening, said that the alliance was founded on the "strongest motives which could act on private feeling; or influence public conduct—it was founded on a sense of common danger, on the conviction of a common interest." Sir Robert Peel sketched the history of the new party, and apologised to his impatient followers for not seizing the reins of government, though he had 313

adherents in the House. His excuse was, that though an opposition, they were a Conservative opposition, and that as such they had to maintain the principles and perform some of the functions of a government. "I hope," he said, "that we shall never adopt the advice which we sometimes receive from ardent friends and professed admirers, namely—to abandon altogether our duty in the House of Commons, for the purpose of creating embarrassment, by leaving the Government to fight it out by themselves. My firm belief is, that by steadily performing our legislative functions, by attending to our duty, by censuring Ministers when censure may be required, by enforcing our principles on all occasions, by amending their measures where they require amendment, though at the same time we should rescue them from temporary embarrassment, yet we shall thereby be establishing new claims on the public approbation."

At the close of the session of 1837 an earnest desire was expressed by the leaders of both parties in the House for an amicable adjustment of two great Irish questions which had been pending for a long time, and had excited a great deal of bad feeling, and wasted much of the time of the Legislature—namely, the Irish Church question, and the question of corporate reform. The Conservatives were disposed to compromise the matter, and to get the Municipal Reform Bill passed through the Lords, provided the Ministry abandoned the celebrated appropriation clause, which would devote any surplus revenue of the Church Establishment, not required for the spiritual care of its members, to the moral and religious education of all classes of the people, without distinction of religious persuasion; providing for the resumption of such surplus, or any part of it, as may be required, by an increase in the numbers of the members of the Established Church. The result of this understanding was the passing of the acts settling those two questions, which has been already recorded. But there were some little incidents of party warfare connected with these matters, which may be noticed here as illustrative of the temper of the times. On the 14th of May Sir Thomas Ackland brought forward a resolution for rescinding the appropriation clause. This Lord John Russell regarded as a breach of faith. He said that the present motion was not in accordance with the Duke of Wellington's declared desire to see the Irish questions brought to a final settlement. "If, indeed," said Lord John, amidst great cheering from the Ministerial side, "the duke had said, 'But I have one proposition to make more, namely, that the declaration which the noble lord (Melbourne) made in the House of Lords at the commencement of his administration should be repudiated, and the resolutions which were come to by the House of Commons shall be rescinded'—if the noble duke had said *that*, he would at once have provoked this answer from the noble lord at the head of the Government: 'It is true that you have made these proposals, but you couple with them conditions inconsistent with our principles, inconsistent with our honour, and upon such terms I cannot propose any measures upon these subjects.' " Acting upon the strength of the declara-

tions made by their opponents, and upon the assurance generally understood that any propositions that were to be made should be propositions that they might consistently support, the Ministers had pressed forward their unpopular Poor Law Bill, and their Tithe Bill, and had held back the Corporation Bill, which was generally acceptable in Ireland. This was done at Sir Robert Peel's request; but they never would have done it had they been aware of Sir T. Ackland's intention. Bitterly complaining of what he believed to be a breach of faith, Lord John said: "The only advantage I have is that which I shall derive for my future guidance from the past conduct of my opponents; which is, that whenever they make professions, I shall consider those professions as snares; that whenever they make declarations, I shall consider those declarations as stratagems, and intended to deceive." With respect to the principle of the appropriation clause, which had been embodied in a resolution, his opinion was unaltered. He declared it to be a wise and just principle, and he could not consent to its reversal; which, moreover, would imply a stigma on the Ministry that he was not willing to bear.

Lord Stanley denied that there was any understanding or agreement in which it was stipulated that the appropriation clause should be persevered in. On the contrary, the very basis of any agreement must be the abandonment of that clause. The rescinding of it would have the most beneficial effect. While that resolution hung over the heads of the Irish clergy, their minds were disturbed, their fears were excited, and to get rid of it they would submit to any pecuniary sacrifice. The greatest objection to the introduction of the Municipal Bill rested upon this; for before that measure was consented to, it was desired to give greater security to the Church. The appropriation clause, therefore, Lord Stanley contended, fettered legislation, and placed a great gulf between the two parties. Lord Morpeth met this objection by stating that it was proposed to place the clergy on the same footing as the judges and the great officers of state—on the same footing as that on which the civil list of the Crown itself was by law guaranteed. This would be done by Act of Parliament, which could not be reversed but by the collective consent of the Legislature. The proposed arrangement could not, in any point of view, be considered as unfairly pressing on the clergy. The debate was then adjourned to the following day, when a scene occurred during a speech of Mr. O'Connell, which is thus recorded in the "Annual Register:"—Mr. O'Connell said, The real question before the House was—how should Ireland be governed? This was the question that had been under discussion for seven hundred years. Shall Ireland be governed by a faction? (Vehement shouts from the Opposition.) Mr. O'Connell then continued in the following strain:—"I thank you (noise renewed) for that shriek. Many shouts of insolent domination (noise), despicable and contemptible as it is (noise), have I heard against my country." (Uproar continued, during which Mr. O'Connell, with uplifted fist, and great violence of manner, uttered several sentences which were inaudible in the gallery. The Speaker

was at last obliged to interfere and call the House to order.) "Let them shout. It is a senseless yell. It is the spirit of the party which has placed you there. Ireland will hear your shrieks. (Continued uproar.) Yes: you may want us again. (Roars of laughter.) What would Waterloo have been if we had not been there? (Ministerial cheers, and Opposition laughter.) I ask not that question for your renowned commander and chief, who is himself an Irishman; but for the hardy soldiers of Ireland, who fought the battle for him. ("Question," and laughter from the Opposition.) I say again, that is the question. The question is—shall the people of Ireland be amalgamated with the people of England? Refuse to receive us into that amalgamation, and abide the consequences. (Cries of "hear" from the Opposition benches.) Sneer at me as you like; but recollect that I speak the voice of millions, who will hear again of the base insult offered to me this evening." (Question, question.") In the sequel of his speech Mr. O'Connell admitted that the Ministerial plan did not go far enough; but he was ready to accede to it, for the sake of an amicable arrangement.

Sir Robert Peel then spoke at great length on all the questions at issue. He made a statement to show that the complaint of Lord John Russell about being over-reached, was without a shadow of foundation. The noble lord's conduct he declared to be without a precedent. He called upon Parliament to come to the discussion of a great question, upon a motion which he intended should be the foundation of the final settlement of that question; and yet, so ambiguous was his language, that it was impossible to say what was or was not the purport of his scheme. Sir Thomas Ackland's motion for rescinding the appropriation resolution was rejected by a majority of 19, the numbers being 317 and 298. On the following day Lord John Russell gave Sir Robert Peel distinctly to understand that the tithe measure would consist solely of a proposition that the composition then existing should be converted into a rent charge. On the 29th of the same month, Lord John Russell having moved that the House should go into committee on the Irish Municipal Bill, Sir Robert Peel gave his views at length on the Irish questions, which were now taken up in earnest, with a view to their final settlement. The House of Commons having disposed of the Corporation Bill, proceeded on the 2nd of July to consider Lord John Russell's resolutions on the Church question. But Mr. Ward, who was strong on that question, attacked the Government for their abandonment of the appropriation clause. He concluded by moving a series of resolutions, re-affirming the appropriation principle. His motion was rejected by a majority of 270 to 46. The House then went into committee, and in due course the Irish Tithe Bill passed into law, and the vexed Church question was settled for a quarter of a century.

The approaching coronation of the Queen became, as the season advanced, the prevailing topic of conversation in all circles. The feeling excited by it was so strong, so deep, and so wide-spread, that a radical journal pro-

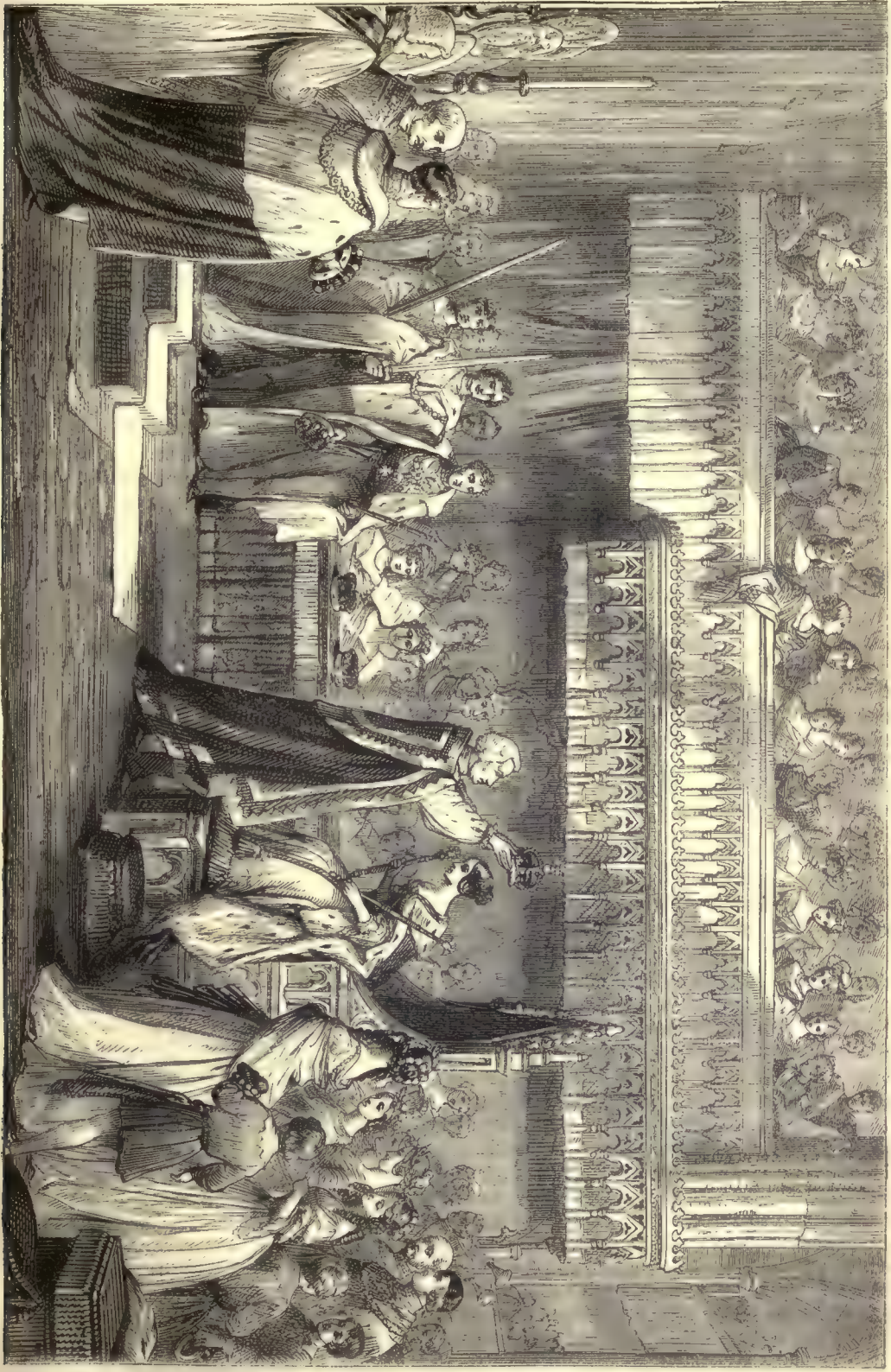
nounced the people to be "coronation mad." The enthusiasm was not confined to the United Kingdom. The contagion was carried to the Continent, and foreigners of various ranks, from all nations, flocked into the metropolis to behold the inauguration of the maiden monarch of the British Empire. "The thousand equipages that thronged the streets, the plumed retainers of the ambassadors, the stream of swarthy strangers, and the incessant din of preparation which resounded by night as well as by day along the intended line of the procession, constituted of themselves a scene of no ordinary animation and interest, and sustained the public mind in an unceasing stretch of expectation."* There were, however, some dissentients, whose objections disturbed the current of public feeling. As soon as it was understood that, on the score of economy, the time-honoured custom of having the coronation banquet in Westminster Hall would not be observed, the Marquis of Londonderry and others zealously exerted themselves to avert the innovation. On the 28th of May the marquis presented a petition from the merchants, traders, and others of the metropolis, praying that the coronation might be deferred till August, and then be conducted on a scale of befitting splendour. Earl Fitzwilliam ridiculed the zealots for court ceremonials. He declared that he viewed the coronation as little better than an idle and ridiculous pageant. Would the loyalty of noble lords, he asked, be augmented by the childish ceremony of putting coronets upon their heads, and compelling them to walk in an absurd procession? Coronations are only suitable to barbarous ages; and he hinted a doubt "whether the exhibition of a youthful princess to a staring populace was consistent with feminine delicacy." The Marquis of Salisbury declared he was less affected by the idle and irreverent taunts of Lord Fitzwilliam than by the humiliating acknowledgment that this great country could not afford to give a dinner to its sovereign. "But I thank God," solemnly exclaimed the noble marquis, "that her Majesty's Ministers have not relinquished the sacred parts of the ceremony; I thank God, too, that my sovereign will do her duty." The Marquis of Londonderry asked whether Lord Fitzwilliam really meant that there should be no coronation? And having received an answer in the affirmative, he asked absurdly whether the noble lord was prepared for the sequel of the proposition, that there should be no Earl Fitzwilliam?

The coronation took place on the 28th of June. The only novel feature of importance consisted in the substitution of a procession through the streets for a banquet in Westminster Hall. It was certainly an improvement, for it afforded the *nation* an opportunity of enjoying the ceremony. The people of all ages, ranks, and conditions, embodied visibly in one animated and exalted whole, exultant and joyful, came forth to greet the youthful sovereign. All the houses in the line of march poured forth their occupants to the windows and balconies. The behaviour of the enormous multitude

which lined the streets, and afterwards spread over the metropolis, was admirable. The utmost eagerness was shown to furnish all the accommodation for spectators that the space would allow, and there was scarcely a house or a vacant spot along the whole line, from Hyde Park Corner to the Abbey, that was not occupied with galleries or scaffolding. At dawn the population were astir, roused by a salvo of artillery from the Tower, and towards six o'clock chains of vehicles, of all sorts and sizes, stretched along the leading thoroughfares; while streams of pedestrians, in holiday attire, poured in continuously, so that the suburbs seemed to empty themselves of all the inhabitants at once. At ten o'clock the head of the procession moved from the palace. When the Queen stepped into the state coach, a salute was fired from the guns ranged in the inclosure, the bands struck up the National Anthem, a new royal standard was hoisted on the marble arch, and the multitude broke forth in loud and hearty cheers. The foreign ambassadors extraordinary looked superb in their new carriages and splendid uniforms. Among them shone conspicuous the state coach of Marshal Soult, which belonged to the last great prince of the house of Condé, and was re-decorated for this occasion. The white-haired marshal himself was greeted along the whole line of procession, and also in the Abbey, with the most cordial cheers. The arrangement of the procession was as follows:—Trumpeters, Life Guards, Resident Ambassadors, Ambassadors Extraordinary from France, Portugal, Sweden, Sardinia, Hanover, Prussia, Spain, Netherlands, Austria, Russia, Belgium, Naples, the precedence being regulated by the time of their arrival; mounted band of Life Guards, the branches of the Royal Family—the Duchess of Kent, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke of Sussex; mounted band; the Queen's Barge Master; the Queen's forty-eight Watermen; twelve of Her Majesty's carriages, each drawn by six horses, and accompanied by two grooms, walking on either side; Life Guards' mounted band; Military Staff and Aides-de-camp, on horseback, three and three, attended by one groom each on either side; Royal Artillery; the Royal Huntsmen; six of Her Majesty's horses, with rich trappings, each horse led by two grooms; the Knight Marshal on horseback; Marshal men, in ranks of four; 100 Yeomen of the Guard, four and four; the state coach, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, attended by a yeoman of the guard at each wheel, and two footmen at each door, the Gold Stick, the Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard riding on either side, attended by two grooms each, conveying the QUEEN, with the Duchess of Sutherland, Mistress of the Robes; the Earl of Albemarle, Master of the Horse; the Duke of Buccleuch, Captain-General of the Royal Archers, attended by two grooms; and lastly, a squadron of Life Guards.

The Queen reached the western entrance of the Abbey at half-past eleven o'clock, and was there met by the great officers of state, the noblemen bearing the regalia, and the bishops carrying the patina, the chalice, and the Bible. The arrangements in the interior of the

* "Annual Register," 1838, p. 135.



THE CORONATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

Abbey were nearly the same as at the previous coronation, but the decorations were thought to be in better taste. Galleries had been erected for the accommodation of spectators, to which about 1,000 persons were admitted. There was also a gallery for the members of the House of Commons, and another for foreign ambassadors. Soon after twelve o'clock the grand procession began to enter the choir, in the order observed on former occasions. The Queen, in her royal robe of crimson velvet, furred with ermine and bordered with gold lace, wearing the collars of her orders, and on her head a circlet of gold, had, on one side, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, also at either side ten gentlemen-at-arms, with their standard-bearer. Her train was borne by Lady Adelaide Paget, Lady F. E. Cowper, Lady A. Wentworth Fitzwilliam, Lady M. A. F. Grimstone, Lady C. A. Gordon Lennox, Lady Mary Talbot, Lady Catherine Stanhope, Lady Louisa Jenkinson. Then came the Mistress of the Robes, the Ladies of the Bed-chamber, the Maids of Honour, the Women of the Bed-chamber, &c.

"The Queen," says the chronicler, "looked extremely well, and had a very animated expression of countenance." The scene within the choir is described as very gorgeous, so much so, that we are told the Turkish Ambassador was absolutely fascinated, and for some time he could not move to his allotted place. Among the foreign ambassadors, Prince Esterhazy presented the most dazzling appearance. "His dress, down to his very boot-heels, sparkled with diamonds." The Queen was received with the most hearty plaudits from all parts of the building, and when she was proclaimed in the formula—"Sirs, I here present unto you Queen Victoria—the undoubted Queen of this realm. Wherefore, all you who are come this day to do your homage, are you willing to do the same?"—there was a loud and universal burst of cheering, with cries of "God save the Queen." When the crown was placed on Her Majesty's head, there was again an enthusiastic cry of "God save the Queen," accompanied by the waving of hats and handkerchiefs. At this moment the peers and peeresses put on their coronets, the bishops their caps, and the kings of arms their crowns, the trumpet sounding, the drums beating, the Tower and park guns firing by signal. The Dukes of Cambridge and Sussex removing their coronets, did homage in these words:—"I do become your liege man of life and limb, and of earthly worship and faith and truth I will bear unto you to live and die against all manner of folks, so help me God." They touched the crown on the Queen's head, kissed her left cheek, and then retired. It was observed that Her Majesty's bearing towards her uncles was very affectionate. The dukes and other peers then performed their homage, the senior of each rank pronouncing the words. As they retired, each peer kissed her Majesty's hand. The Duke of Wellington, Earl Grey, and Lord Melbourne, were loudly cheered as they ascended the steps to the throne. Lord Rollo, who was upwards of eighty, stumbled and fell on the steps. The Queen immediately stepped forward, and held out her hand

to assist the aged peer. This touching incident called forth the loudly expressed admiration of the entire assembly. While the ceremony of doing homage was being performed, the Earl of Surrey, treasurer of the household, was scattering silver medals of the coronation about the choir and the lower galleries, which were scrambled for with great eagerness. The ceremonials did not conclude till past four o'clock. The procession, on its return, presented a still more striking appearance than before, from the circumstance that the Queen wore her crown, and the royal and noble personages their coronets. The mass of brilliants, relieved here and there by a large coloured stone, and the purple velvet cap, became her Majesty extremely well, and had a superb and classic effect. The sight of the streets "paved with heads," and the houses alive with spectators, was most impressive. The Queen entertained a party of one hundred at dinner, and in the evening witnessed, from the roof of her palace, the fireworks in the Green Park. The Duke of Wellington gave a grand banquet at Apsley House, and several cabinet ministers gave official state dinners next day. The people were gratified, at the solicitation of Mr. Hawes, M.P. for Lambeth, with permission to hold a fair in Hyde Park, which continued for four days, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Monday. The area allotted comprised nearly one-third of the park, extending from near the margin of the Serpentine river to a line within a short distance of Grosvenor Gate. To the interior there were eight entrances, the main one fifty feet wide, and the others thirty feet each. The inclosed area was occupied by theatres, taverns, and an endless variety of exhibitions, the centre being appropriated to lines of stalls, for the sale of fancy goods, sweetmeats, and toys. The Queen condescended to visit the fair on Friday. The illuminations on the night of the coronation were on a larger and more magnificent scale than had been before seen in the metropolis, and the fireworks were also extremely grand. All the theatres in the metropolis, and nearly all the other places of amusement, were opened gratuitously that evening by her Majesty's command, and, though all were crowded, the arrangements were so excellent that no accident occurred. Indeed, it was a subject of wonder that during a long day of excitement and crowding, where hundreds of thousands were either waiting for hours in certain positions, or rushing from place to place, the most perfect good order and courteous behaviour characterised the enormous masses of the middle and working classes—all the effect of the good feeling and self-command of the people, without the aid of the military or police: which was a mystery to foreigners. From a return laid on the table of the House of Commons of the accidents and offences on the day of the coronation, it appeared that only twenty persons were brought to the stations—seven charged with picking pockets, twelve with gambling, and one with a felony committed some time before. Upwards of one hundred children were lost; but they were all brought to the police-stations, and restored to their parents. In the provinces, rejoicing was universal.

Public dinners, feasts to the poor, processions, and illuminations were the order of the day. At Liverpool was laid the first stone of St. George's Hall, in presence of a great multitude. At Cambridge 13,000 persons were feasted on one spot, in the open field, called Parker's Piece, in the centre of which was raised an orchestra, for 100 musicians, surrounded by a gallery for 1,600 persons. Encircling this centre were three rows of tables for the school children, and from them radiated, like the spokes of a wheel, the main body of the tables, 60 in number, and 25 feet in length. Beyond their outer extremity were added 28 other tables, in a circle; and outside the whole a promenade was roped in for spectators, who were more numerous than those who dined. The circumference of the whole was more than one-third of a mile.

The *fêtes* continued for several days, and it was many weeks before the metropolis was divested of its gala appearance. The Corporation of London, never backward in hospitality, invited the foreign ambassadors to a splendid entertainment, where they were met by the most distinguished personages in the United Kingdom, without distinction of party.

The coronation of George IV. is said to have cost £243,000. William's coronation was on a modest scale, and cost only £50,000. The Queen's came to £70,000, the excess being occasioned by the measures taken to enable the great mass of the people to participate in this national festivity. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated, in the House of Commons, that the public had paid for seats commanding a view of the procession no less a sum than £200,000; and that 400,000 individuals had been added to the ordinary metropolitan population, which was then 1,500,000. "Never," said the right hon. gentleman, "was there given to a sovereign, or to a country, a more exalted proof of good conduct and discretion than was afforded by the assembled multitude on this occasion."

CHAPTER XLII.

Foreign Policy of the Government—Intervention in Spain—The British Legion to serve the Queen of Spain—Debate in the Commons on the Foreign Enlistment Act—Defeat of the British Legion—Vindication of the Legion by Sir De Lacy Evans—Trades Unions, Combinations, and Strikes—Lord Ashley's Bill for the Better Regulation of Factories thrown out—Resolution on same subject lost—Report of Select Committee on Pensions charged on the Civil List—Extraordinary Delusion of John Nicholls Thom; Riots in consequence; his Death; Trial of his Abettors; Discussion on the Matter in the Commons—Inquiry into the Religious Condition of the Peasantry—Prorogation of Parliament—Address of the Speaker to the Queen—The Queen's Speech—Review of the Session—Pamphlet on Lord Melbourne's Position with regard to the Queen.

THE foreign policy of England has been in all ages the subject of keen discussion in Parliament, and domestic parties have often fought their battles on foreign fields. When the Tories were in office, they were generally accused of a leaning to continental despotism. When the Whigs were in power, they were charged with favouring democracy and revolution. The defence of the latter was that the true policy of England should be pacific, and that they had succeeded in maintaining peace. They

had aimed at the preservation of the balance of power, as established by the treaties of Vienna in 1815 and 1816.

It was admitted by their opponents that the period at which they undertook the guidance of our foreign policy was the most critical that had occurred since the conclusion of peace; and it could not be denied that they were entitled to credit for the fact that the French and Belgian revolutions, and the Polish insurrection, had run their respective courses without disturbing the tranquillity of these realms. We have been indebted for this exemption to our acting more or less steadily upon the principle of non-intervention in the quarrels of our neighbours. This principle was, however, departed from in connection with the civil war in Spain, which was characterised by unparalleled atrocities on both sides.

Many of our countrymen took the deepest interest in this conflict, and some Englishmen were actually fighting in the ranks of the sanguinary monster, Don Carlos. It was naturally a source of painful interest to behold British soldiers fighting in a foreign land without the protection of the British flag, exposed to all the shame and hardships of a warfare in which there was no glory to compensate for its disasters.

In the session of 1837, Lord Mahon, who had been Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Sir Robert Peel's government, reviewed the line of policy pursued by Lord Palmerston. He complained that the public had been kept in a state of ignorance whether they were at peace or at war, and in his opinion it was a peace without tranquillity, and a war without honour. The object of the quadruple alliance had been to appease the civil dissensions in Portugal, and not to sanction the intervention of France and England in Spain. He lamented the policy that led to the additional articles signed in 1834, which stipulated for a certain degree of interference. But Lord Palmerston had thought proper to proceed still further in suspending the Foreign Enlistment Act, and allowing 12,000 Englishmen to enlist under the banners of the Queen of Spain. More than £540,000 had been already expended in the war, and in Lord Mahon's opinion the influence of Great Britain and Spain had not been augmented by these measures. In proof of which he alleged that British merchants got less fair play there than French merchants.

Lord Palmerston defended his policy against the attacks of Lord Mahon and other speakers. The quadruple treaty, he contended, contemplated assistance to the constitutional party in Spain as well as in Portugal. It was concluded because there was a civil war in Portugal; and when the civil war was transferred to Spain, the same parties who took part with Portugal by treaty were bound at an early period to extend its provisions to Spain, its object being expressly "the pacification of the Peninsula by the expulsion of the two Infants from it." He differed widely with Lord Mahon in thinking the suspension of the Foreign Enlistment Act was disgraceful to the Government of this country.

Examples of the same kind were to be found in the most brilliant periods of the history of England. The age of Elizabeth was full of instances of the precise kind alluded to by the noble lord. "That great and enlightened sovereign," said Lord Palmerston, "frequently allowed her subjects to volunteer in support of the Huguenots of France and of the Protestants of the Low Countries, and even to interfere in the affairs of Scotland; and she acted wisely in so doing. It was his decided conviction that the suspension of the Act was a proceeding most wise, and most honourable to the country. A disputed succession," he continued, has "been always considered among European nations a matter, not merely involving the interests of the particular kingdom, but also a question of great general interest. In this case England had not interfered, in the ordinary sense of the word, for the purpose of imposing on the Spanish people a government which they had not themselves adopted. It was not that kind of interference which it was feared the Government of 1830 was about to exercise in Belgium, for the purpose of preventing them by an overwhelming force from assuming the political condition they desired. The question, Who should be sovereign of Spain? was one seriously involving the interests of Europe, as determining what should be the foreign tendencies, and who should be the foreign allies, of Spain. Spain had been connected with various countries: at one time with Austria, and at another with France; the object was in future that there should be neither an Austrian Spain nor a French Spain, but a Spain which should be Spanish: and, for his part, he did not despair of seeing that country relieved from the abasement into which she had fallen, and regenerated as a distinct power, which should be the ally of this country. He contrasted the efforts of the Tories to maintain the cause of despotism in Europe, with the successful endeavours of the Government in the pursuit of a more liberal and enlightened policy. The former supported Don Miguel up to the last moment, and now gave their countenance to Don Carlos, who was the author of the assassination decree of Durango, and was believed by all Europe to be intent on establishing the Inquisition as soon as he arrived at Madrid. The ministers, on the other hand, might boast of the moral support they had given to the cause of national liberty in Spain—of the part they had taken in the emancipation of the Greeks—of the free constitutions of Belgium and Portugal, which had grown up under their auspices; and if they could contribute, however humbly, to the same happy state of things in Spain as existed in Belgium and Portugal, he should esteem it a source of proud satisfaction to the latest hour of his life."

Sir Robert Peel, in replying to Lord Palmerston, openly disavowed all participation in the principles or sympathy with the cause of Don Carlos; and he begged most distinctly to state that he wished to see Spain in the settled enjoyment of a free and enlightened form of civil government. But his belief was that the course adopted by our ministers was actually defeating its expressed objects, obstructing improvement, and calculated

neither to raise our own character as a nation nor to gain the affections of Spain.

Colonel Evans had taken the command of the Spanish legion, which throughout the whole of the campaign was encompassed with difficulties and pursued by disasters, without any military success sufficiently brilliant to gild the clouds with glory. Within a fortnight after the debate on Lord Mahon's motion, came the news of its utter defeat before Hernani, on the 16th of the same month. This defeat encouraged the opponents of Lord Palmerston's policy to renew their attacks. Accordingly, immediately after the recess, Sir Henry Hardinge brought forward a motion on the subject. He complained that no adequate provision was made for the support of those who were in the legion. At Vittoria they were placed for four months in uninhabited convents, without bedding, fuel, or supplies of any kind. Not less than 40 officers and 700 men fell victims to their privations. The worst consequence was, however, the total demoralisation of the troops. Theirs was not honourable war, it was butchery. They were massacring a fine and independent people, who had committed no offence against this country. Ill treatment, want of food and of clothing, habits of insubordination and mutiny, and want of confidence in their officers, had produced their natural effects. Let them palliate the disaster as they would, there was no doubt, he said, of the fact that a large body of Britons had suffered a defeat such as he believed no British soldiers had undergone in the course of the last five or six hundred years.

On the other hand, Mr. O'Connell remarked on the eagerness with which the recent disasters of the legion had been seized upon by the gentlemen opposite. The repeated actions in which they had done honour to the British name were forgotten. Nothing was said of their victories; but not a moment was lost in fastening on their defeat. Sir H. Hardinge had dwelt strongly upon the atrocities committed in the course of the present warfare in Spain. Had the honourable and gallant officer never heard of orders for refusing quarter issued even to our own troops? Had he never read of the cruelties practised by the Spaniards at the capture of St. Sebastian? Had he never heard of the butcheries at Ciudad Rodrigo and at Badajoz? These cruelties were one of the wretched consequences of war; but it was unjust to employ them, particularly as a taunt, against General Evans and the legion.

Sir Robert Inglis said that it had been alleged against the Tories that they were the enemies of the Church of Rome in their own country, but its friends in every other, from its association with despotism. He disclaimed any such feeling on their part. The Tories, he said, supported the cause of Don Carlos, as being the cause of legitimate right; but they had no wish to interfere on his behalf.

Mr. Sheil defended the policy of the Government in an eloquent speech. "It is alleged," said the honourable and learned gentleman, "that the measures of the Government have not produced any good result. I ask, if those measures had not been adopted, what would

have befallen the Spanish people? Would not Bilbao have been taken by assault, and the standard of Don Carlos at this moment have been floating from the castle of St. Sebastian? Or try the allegation by another test. Let me suppose this motion carried. The courier that will convey the intelligence will carry tidings of great joy to St. Petersburg, to Vienna, to Berlin; and he will convey tidings of great dismay wherever men value the possession of liberty, or pant for its enjoyment. It will palsy the arm of freedom in Spain—a terrible revulsion will be produced; from Calpe to the Pyrenees the cry, ‘We are betrayed by England!’ will be heard; and over that nation which you will have indeed betrayed, Don Carlos will march, without an obstacle, to Madrid!” It is stated that cheers from the Opposition here interrupted the honourable member, to which he replied:—“You cheer me, do you? Who are you that cheer me? Not your leaders; not the men who are placed conspicuously before me; they know, they feel the impolicy of these rash manifestations; they profess horror at the atrocities of Don Carlos, and deprecate his triumph; but you that cheer me disclose your hearts, and exhibit the wishes by which your political conduct is determined.” The debate was adjourned, and the noble Foreign Secretary again effectively vindicated his policy.

General Evans having returned to England, his services were acknowledged by his being made Knight Commander of the Bath, a distinction for which the opponents of the Government could see no good reason, and which became the subject of strong animadversion early in the session of 1838. Mr. Bradshaw, on the 23rd of February, inquired whether the honour had been conferred in the regular course through the War-office, on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief? to which Lord Palmerston replied, that the appointment had been made in the usual manner by Her Majesty’s Government, and upon their own responsibility, and that he regarded it as earned and well bestowed.

On the 13th of March, Sir De Lacy Evans vindicated his legion and himself in Parliament. With respect to the sickness and mortality stated to have prevailed in the British ranks, he observed that, at the commencement of his operations, the whole force of the legion amounted to about 8,000 men, and including subsequent reinforcements, never exceeded 9,600. When they marched from Bilbao, the entire infantry was composed either of striplings or of men too old for service; 2,300 were so crippled from disease and other causes, as to be incapable of bearing arms; and they were only permitted to remain for lack of means to transport them home. At least two-thirds of these men died in the hospital, without having done a single day’s duty. The effective force of the legion never exceeded 4,700. The whole number who perished in Vittoria and its environs, in six months, was 1,223; and the total loss in the two years, including those who were killed in action, about 2,078. The number who passed through the hospitals during that period was 1,430—a number which did not indicate any extraordinary prevalence of

disease. During the thirty months’ campaign of the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula, 346,000 men passed through the hospitals, on a standing force of about 60,000. The gallant officer, in enumerating other difficulties with which he had to contend, stated that he had reason to believe that the Carlist emissaries in this country had induced men to enlist in the legion with the intention of deserting to Don Carlos on their arrival; 350 recruits had gone over to the enemy in this way. Speaking of the want of discipline alleged to have prevailed in his force, he quoted the Duke of Wellington, who had complained, in 1810, that convoys of money were constantly plundered; that military law was not sufficient to preserve discipline in the army; and that murders, robberies, and perjuries were very frequent. He then entered into details to show that the defeat of Hirnani was less disastrous than it was commonly represented to have been. There had been no flight on that occasion, nor had the marines saved the army. A retreat was, indeed, made; but only for 1,000 or 1,500 yards. On the two days during which the affair lasted, the killed and wounded of his force amounted to 700 men. Having given a circumstantial account of the other principal operations in which the legion had been engaged, General Evans stated that the conduct of General Espartero had been admirable; and that he did not believe that a more honourable man, a braver or more faithful soldier, or a truer friend to his country, was in existence. After several other members had addressed the House, on both sides, the debate was adjourned till the next day, when a singular incident brought it to a premature termination. The order of the day for resuming the discussion having been read without any member presenting himself to address the House, the Speaker read Lord Eliot’s motion, and put the question. There was a call of “Aye” from the Opposition, and of “No” from the Ministerial side of the House; whereupon the Speaker said, “I think the Noes have it.” Some members of the Opposition then exclaimed, “The Ayes have it.” Strangers being ordered to withdraw, a division took place amid great confusion, all parties being apparently taken by surprise, and utterly unprepared for so abrupt a conclusion of the proceedings. The motion was negatived by 70 to 62.

The subject of trades unions, combinations, and strikes was brought before Parliament in February by Mr. Wakley, who moved for a select committee to inquire into the constitution, practices, and effects of the Operative Cotton Spinners’ Association of Glasgow and its neighbourhood. To this Mr. O’Connell moved, by way of amendment, for a select committee to inquire into combinations and trades unions generally in the United Kingdom. The subject is worth notice on account of the interesting speech delivered by the honourable and learned gentleman with reference to trades unions in Ireland. He declared there was no tyranny equal to that which was exercised by their members in public over their fellow-labourers. He had in vain wished to convince these people of the wicked-

ness and impolicy of their proceedings. He had had interviews, hour after hour, with the deputations from various trades, and had seldom met with men of more ability, information, or skill in putting forward their own views. He had also challenged public discussion, and assemblies had been held for the purpose, but in vain, for the workmen, by a concerted interruption, had rendered it impossible to proceed with the business of the day. They refused to hear him; and, without denying that they had been violating the law, they expressed their determination to persist in their system. Cotton-printing had been established at Belfast by a Mr. Grimshaw, who employed 107 persons in his service; but in consequence of the tyranny of the combination, which insisted peremptorily upon an equalisation of wages, he was compelled to abandon his business. In Bandon another large manufactory was opened, and the proprietor obtained an important contract. He bought the machinery, and as soon as it was erected his men "turned out" for higher wages, telling him that they knew he had the contract, and that he was therefore in their power. He worked out the contract, and then gave up the manufactory; and the loss to the town of Bandon in wages was between £10,000 and £12,000 a year. It was calculated that wages to the amount of £500,000 a year were lost to Dublin alone by these associations. The combination of tailors in that city, for instance, had raised the price of clothes to such a pitch, that it was worth a person's while to go to Glasgow, and wait a couple of days for a suit, the difference in the price paying the expenses of the trip. In the same city there were formerly four ship-builders; now, not a single ship was constructed at the Dublin Docks. Mr. O'Connell concluded by saying that he had no wish to re-enact the old combination laws. Some combinations were not only harmless but meritorious; and his aim would be to separate unions of this kind from those of a pernicious character. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, after having paid some compliments to Mr. O'Connell for the course he had pursued with reference to this subject, proposed a second amendment, which did not materially differ from that of the member for Dublin. He moved for a select committee to inquire into the operation of the 6th of George IV., and into the general constitution of trades unions, and also of the combinations of workmen and masters in the United Kingdom. Mr. Wakley expressed himself well satisfied to leave the question in the hands of Her Majesty's Ministers; and Mr. Spring Rice's motion was agreed to.*

The employment of children in factories also occupied the attention of Parliament at this time. A bill had been framed in 1833 with the most benevolent intentions for the protection of factory children. Lord Ashley was distinguished for his persevering exertions to mitigate the hardships endured by children working in the mills. The subject was felt to be one of great difficulty, inasmuch as humanity and political economy came into collision. It was seen that when the Legislature under-

took to limit the hours of labour, making it penal to work children more than a stated period, according to their age, it at once disturbed the whole course of manufacturing industry. Short time involves short wages for adults: for ten hours' labour men will not receive the wages of twelve. Parents may absolutely require the labour of their children for the support of their family. On the other hand, their cupidity often exacts too much from children of tender years, whose growth must be stunted and their constitutions debilitated by unnatural confinement in a heated atmosphere for so many hours in the day. Legal protection therefore seemed to be absolutely necessary in the interests of humanity and of society. The law excluded from factory labour all children under nine years of age, except in silk factories, and prohibited those under thirteen from working more than thirteen hours any one day; the maximum in silk mills alone being ten hours. The provisions of the law were, however, evaded by fraud. Children were represented as being much older than they really were, and abuses prevailed which induced Lord Ashley to bring in a bill upon the subject. Accordingly, on the 22nd of June the noble lord moved, by way of amendment to the order of the day, the second reading of his bill for the better regulation of factories. Sir Robert Peel, while differing from Lord Ashley in his views, strongly condemned the ministers for their faltering policy on the subject. Session after session they introduced and abandoned bills, thus applying a perpetual blister to the sides of the country, and keeping up the fever and irritation of a dangerous sore. If the question admits of solution, he said, let the Government solve it at once. If, on the other hand, they feel that the difficulties which surround the question are inseparable from it and insoluble, then, as a Government, let them manfully come forward and acknowledge the fact; let them do either one or the other; and then the manufacturers, knowing what they really mean, will shape their course accordingly. "It is," he continued, "because I see that the interests of humanity, in the large view of the question, are likely to be less consulted in the short-sighted restriction of labour than they are by its perfect freedom; it is because the fact is unquestionable, that, though you may exempt the child from fatigue, you also deprive it of protective employment, by driving the manufacturers to seek elsewhere the protection which is denied at home. It is for these reasons that I implore Parliament to decide the question this night, whether they will legislate or not."

The order of the day was carried by a majority of 119 to 111. The bill was therefore lost by a majority of eight. On the 20th of July Lord Ashley again brought the whole matter under the consideration of the House in a speech full of painful details, and concluded by moving a resolution to the effect that the House deeply regretted that the imperfect and ineffective law for the regulation of labour in factories had been suffered to continue so long without any amendment. Mr. Fox Maule replied to Lord Ashley, denying his charges against the Government, and warning him of the danger that by

* "Annual Register," 1838, p. 207.

the interference of the Legislature children might be deprived of employment altogether, and thrown idle upon the country. Several gentlemen connected with manufactures addressed the House, but it is a singular fact that one of the best speeches in the debate was delivered by Mr. O'Connell, who could not be expected to know much about factories. He showed from the evidence taken before the "Combination Committee" that the law had been deliberately violated at Glasgow and Manchester, because it could not be carried out

were still greater. He asked those who were most clamorous for an alteration in the law, would they give the people cheap bread? Would they consent to repeal that tax, the removal of which would enable the mother to give more food to her child? The lowering of the price of the loaf by a halfpenny or a penny might spare half an hour's labour to the children. In the present state of the world, was it to be expected that men would obtain more wages for less work? Capital was the lightest of things; it would make to itself wings, and, eluding all



LORD ASHLEY, AFTERWARDS EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

without entirely stopping the machinery of the mills. And why was this? Because they had legislated against the nature of things, and against the rights of industry. They were bound to provide for the protection of the children. Be it so; but they were equally bound to abstain from any interference with adults, who should be masters of their own time. They were legislating between the parent and the child. But why did the parent part with the child? Why expose it to the miseries to be endured in a factory? Because the sufferings of hunger

attempts to restrain it, fix itself upon that favourite spot where labour was free and bread cheap. Let them not, then, be guilty of the childish folly of regulating the labour of adults, and go about parading before the world their ludicrous humanity, which would end by converting their manufacturers into beggars.

Lord John Russell argued that, in the present condition of the manufacturing world, we could not, with restricted hours of labour, compete with other nations. A ten hours' bill would drive the manufacturers abroad; and it would

no longer be a question as to an hour or two more or less work to be performed by the children, but as to how their starvation was to be averted. With restricted hours of labour would come diminished wages, and in such case how could the corn laws be kept out of the consideration of the people? As to the violation of the existing law, the noble lord did not see why that should be a ground of reproach. They might as well hope to extinguish poaching by their game laws, smuggling by their revenue laws, and bribery by their election laws, as expect to prevent over-working by any factory law, which the avarice of the masters on the one hand, and the desire of the men to increase their earnings on the other, would inevitably combine to defeat. Mr. Hume contended that it was the corn laws that obliged persons to work for twelve, or thirteen, or fourteen hours in English factories, while in similar establishments on the Continent they only labour for ten. On a division, the motion was lost by a majority of 121 to 106.

A select committee had been appointed in 1837, to inquire how far the pensions charged on the civil list, and on the consolidated fund, respectively, ought to be continued, regard being had to the just claims of the parties, and to economy in the public expenditure. Their report appeared in July this year, and it was found that, of the whole number of pensioners (700), a large proportion had a valid claim upon the public either for services extraordinary in their nature or insufficiently remunerated on the established scale of reward. In some cases the pension was the commutation of a legal allowance; in others, it was purely charitable. All that the committee was able to effect in the way of saving was the reduction of about £9,000, composed of pensions either actually rescinded or voluntarily resigned by the parties themselves. A circular had been addressed to all the pensioners, requiring each to state the ground on which the pension was given. The result was a very curious and interesting document, abounding in instances in which the venerable descendants of some hero of ancient and traditionary wars were brought in the attitude of supplicants to the bar of the committee. One lady, named Mortimer, aged sixty-seven, was the daughter of a general who commanded at the taking of the island of St. Lucia from the French, in the year 1780, leaving a family of infant daughters without provision. Mary Brereton, aged eighty-nine, had a pension as a reward for the services of a relative in the celebrated reduction of Manilla; and so on. The committee recommended that precaution should be taken to prevent fraud, that the warrant should set forth distinctly the reason for the grant, and that under no circumstances should the mere combination of poverty with hereditary rank be considered as a justification of a grant of the pension. In April the sum of £33,500 had been granted to the Queen for payment of pensions becoming due pending the inquiry.

It now becomes our duty to record a case of extraordinary delusion, attended with fatal consequences, which occurred in Kent in the summer of this year. Some years before, a native of Cornwall, named John

Nicholl Thom, abruptly left his home, and made his appearance in that county, where he soon became a distinguished personage. He exchanged the name of Thom for the style and title of Sir William Courtenay, Knight of Malta; and he adopted the practice of parading his naturally fine and commanding person before the admiring people, clad in rich and extravagant costume, and pouring forth streams of exciting and most persuasive eloquence. Notwithstanding these lofty pretensions, however, he was in reality the son of a small farmer and maltster, at St. Columb, in Cornwall. Having been for fifteen years a cellarman to wine merchants at Truro, he set up in business as a malster and hop-dealer, and conducted himself for four years very respectably. His premises being consumed by fire, he received £3,000 as insurance, a sum which was supposed to have been far beyond their value. Two years after he freighted a vessel with a large quantity of malt to Liverpool, and, having disposed of it, turned adventurer. His manners and figure were suited to the character which he assumed. His countenance indicated him to be of foreign extraction, and he decked his person with gay and imposing costume: his conversation showed that he was well acquainted with every part of the kingdom. The populace, attracted by his romantic appearance, and fascinated by his singular talents, flocked round him with the wildest enthusiasm, while even the superior classes of society furnished him with occasional partisans. In the year 1833, he stood for the city of Canterbury on the Conservative interest, and polled 950 votes. Soon after he was convicted of perjury, and sentenced to six years' transportation. Decided symptoms of insanity appeared on the trial, and he was removed from Maidstone gaol to the County Lunatic Asylum, where he remained four years in confinement as a criminal lunatic. In October, 1837, Lord John Russell, in virtue of the power invested in him as Home Secretary, by the act of George IV., released him, and ordered him to be delivered to his friends. It seems, however, that they took very little care of him, for he returned to Kent in the spring of 1838, where his conduct became more extravagant than ever. To his political pretensions he now added others of a religious character. He claimed a divine mission, and announced himself to be the Messiah. The infatuated peasantry, who were literally enchanted by his eloquence and his personal accomplishments, readily acknowledged his pretension, and did homage to him as a divine being. He also claimed to be entitled to large estates in Kent, and he promised his followers that they should have fine farms without rent. He would shower upon them favours and honours, for he had boundless influence at court, and was to sit on Her Majesty's right hand on the day of the coronation. As proof of his Messiahship he pointed to punctures in his hands, which he said were inflicted by the nails in the cross, and to a cicatrice in his side as the wound out of which issued blood and water. As a matter of course, he was invulnerable to steel or shot, a fact which he was about to put to the proof; for he placed himself at the head of nearly 100 of the

most determined of his followers, for the purpose of redressing political wrongs.

He fired a pistol, said to be loaded with ball, against his own body, and also against some of his followers, without injury. He put lighted matches under a corn stack, but the stack did not take fire, because, as the lunatic said, and his companions believed, he had commanded it not to burn. He shot at a star, and they declared it fell into the sea. One of his followers afterwards confessed that so convinced were they that they could not be shot, that they would have attacked 2,000 soldiers. He told them there was great opposition throughout the land, and, indeed, throughout the world; but that if they followed him, he would lead them on to glory. He had come to earth on a cloud, and on a cloud he should return; that neither bullets nor weapons of any kind could injure them, if they had but faith in him as their Saviour. If 10,000 soldiers came against them, they would either espouse his cause or fall dead at his command. At the conclusion of an exciting harangue, one of his followers, Alexander Foad, a respectable farmer, knelt down at his feet and worshipped him; so did another man, named Brankfort. Foad then inquired whether he should follow him in the body, or go home and follow him in the heart. To this Thom replied, "Follow me in the body." Foad then sprang to his feet in an ecstasy of joy, and with a voice of great animation exclaimed, "Go on, go on; till I drop, I'll follow thee." Brankfort was also accepted in a similar manner, and exhibited the same enthusiastic devotion. Thom uttered terrific denunciations of eternal torture against all who should refuse to follow him. To some he pretended that he was 2,000 years old. One woman sent her son to join him with a mother's blessing, and scarcely could the evidence of her son's broken thigh convince her that his followers were not invulnerable. At length, the natural consequences of this insanity appeared in melancholy and fatal results. On Monday, the 28th of May, the pretended Messiah and his followers sallied forth from the village of Boughton. A loaf was broken and placed upon a pole, with a flag of white and blue, and a rampant lion. They proceeded thence to Goodnesstone, near Faversham, producing the greatest excitement as they advanced, and hourly adding to their numbers. At the last halting-place Thom stated that he would strike the decisive blow. They next went to Herne Hill, where he demanded and obtained food for his followers. At Dargate Common he took off his shoes, and said, "I now stand on my own bottom." By his desire, his followers fell on their knees, and were engaged in a mockery of prayer for half an hour. They visited Newnham, Eastling, Throwley, Seldwick, Lees, and Selling, and returned to Bossenden farm, where they arrived on a Wednesday evening. On the following morning, May 31st, at the request of a farmer whose men had been seduced from their work, a constable named Mears was sent to apprehend an apprentice. After a little parley, the "Knight of Malta" inquired which was the constable, and on Mears replying that he was, Thom immediately drew a pistol and shot him, and then stabbed him

with a dagger, after which he flung the body into a ditch. There were two other constables, who immediately rode back to the magistrates, and reported the facts. The country was now in such a state of excitement and alarm, that it was deemed advisable to send to Canterbury for a party of military, who speedily arrived, accompanied by several magistrates. By this time the whole body of rioters had retreated to a deep and sequestered part of Bossenden Wood, where Thom shouted and exhorted his adherents to behave like men, and excited them to desperate fury. On perceiving the soldiers, he advanced with the greatest *sang froid*, and in presence of the troops, deliberately shot Lieutenant Bennett, of the 45th Regiment, who was in advance of his party, and who fell dead upon the spot. The soldiers then immediately fired, and Thom was one of the first killed. In a few moments ten lives were sacrificed, and a number of persons were maimed for the remainder of their days. A coroner's jury on Mears, the constable, found a verdict of "wilful murder" against William Percy Honeywood Courtenay, *alias* John Nicholl Thom, and five others, of whom one was dead. At the inquest on Lieutenant Bennett, a similar verdict was found against Courtenay and eighteen of his followers, of whom eight had been killed. Thom was buried on the 5th of June at Herne Hill; the portion of the burial service referring to the resurrection having been omitted, from fear of cherishing the delusion of his followers that he should rise from the dead.

The trial of the parties engaged in this unfortunate affair, known as the "Canterbury Riots," commenced at Maidstone on the 9th of August, before Lord Denman, who charged the jury to the effect that if they were of opinion that Thom was of unsound mind—so that if he had been put on his trial, he could not have been convicted of murder—the principal being acquitted, the accessories must also be acquitted on the first count, which charged them with aiding and abetting Thom. But on the second count the evidence was strong against the prisoners, who were guilty of murder, if the jury thought that they armed themselves with dangerous weapons, reckless whether death might ensue in resisting a lawful authority, and death had ensued with their co-operation. The jury, after about twenty minutes' deliberation, brought in a verdict of "guilty" on the second count, with a strong recommendation to mercy on account of the infatuation with which they were led astray by Courtenay. Lord Denman immediately pronounced sentence of death, but added that the lives of the prisoners would be spared. A similar sentence was pronounced upon the murderers of Lieutenant Bennett. Tyler and Wills were transported for life, Price for ten years, and a number of others were imprisoned for one year, with hard labour. The Government gave a pension of £40 a year to the widow of the constable who was shot in the discharge of his duty.

This outburst of folly and fanaticism created a more profound sensation of astonishment than any other example of religious delusion in modern times. There seemed to be no circumstance which was capable of

explaining it: neither the time nor the place in which it occurred was such as could be considered favourable to the spread of such a monstrous infatuation. It happened at an advanced period of the nineteenth century, when enlightenment had become widely diffused, and religious teaching had produced fruits which ought to have rendered a belief in such absurd pretensions impossible. The scene was laid, not amidst poverty and destitution, but in Kent, the very garden of England, among those comfortable farm-houses and neat cottages in which it might be reasonably expected that a well educated, and therefore an orderly and a religious population would be found. Nor was it confined to the humbler classes; not only hundreds of the peasantry and mechanics, but some of the superior orders were ready to lay down their lives for an impostor, who, though he pretended to supernatural power, had never done anything which even the grossest ignorance could construe into a miracle, and who had nothing whatever to recommend him but a pleasing appearance and a plausible manner. The extraordinary character of this outbreak, which, notwithstanding the proneness of mankind to be willingly deceived, seemed quite unaccountable, induced the Central Society of Education to make some inquiries regarding its cause; and these led to a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. The locality was, it is true, fertile, and highly cultivated; nevertheless, it was a moral desert: its inhabitants were prosperous and comfortable, but they were almost devoid of religious or intellectual culture. Those on whom the charge of instructing them devolved, appear to have lamentably neglected their duties. In the Ville of Dunkirque, near Canterbury, there was neither church nor clergyman; there were neither national nor Lancasterian schools in the villages, and those who attended the wretched substitutes for them learned nothing. The results were such as might have been expected. Of forty-five persons above the age of fourteen, who resided at Herne Hill, only eleven could read and write; and of 113 children in Dunkirque, only 10 could read or write tolerably. The zeal of the various religious denominations was aroused by these melancholy and surprising revelations. This deplorable state of things was mitigated, if not put an end to; the requirements of public worship and the means of education were supplied in the majority of cases; but there still exist, in East Kent, villages that are destitute of any public provision for the instruction of the children of their inhabitants.

One would suppose that this melancholy affair could have had no sort of connection with political parties, yet it became the occasion of angry party discussions in the House of Commons. By an unlucky coincidence Thom was released from the lunatic asylum just at the time of the last general election. His father voted for Sir Hussey Vivian at the Cornwall county election. Sir Hussey was the Ministerial candidate, and it was insinuated that the discharge of the dangerous lunatic was the result of undue influence. The subject was accordingly taken up by Sir E. Knatchbull in the House of

Commons, who animadverted on the conduct of the Home Secretary in connection with the transaction. Lord John Russell defended himself successfully from the charge; he showed that he had exercised his powers merely in the ordinary manner, at the urgent request of the parents of the lunatic, and after ascertaining from the local authorities that it was a fit case for the exercise of the prerogative of the Crown, and asserted that the Cornwall election was never mentioned in connection with the matter. Sir Hussey Vivian declared upon his honour that he was not aware till the previous week that the father of the lunatic had voted at the election. Sir E. Knatchbull had moved for a select committee to inquire into the matter. Lord Howick objected to some of the names, as not calculated to inspire confidence in their decision. One of the gentlemen mentioned — Mr. Praed — resented with indignation the objection, characterizing it as “the superfluous, gross, and unnecessary affront put upon the members to whom the noble lord had alluded.” But it was said that Lord Howick’s demeanour was courtesy itself compared with Sir E. Lytton Bulwer’s, who permitted his excited feelings to betray him into a strange and utterly unprovoked attack upon Mr. Praed, whom he charged with changing his opinions, and as a proof mentioned that when at college he had celebrated the 30th of January with a calf’s head dinner. This was distinctly denied, and an altercation ensued, which required the interposition of the Speaker. There were various divisions on the selection of the committee, which was ultimately appointed, with the substitution of some other names.

On the 16th of August the Queen proceeded to Westminster for the purpose of proroguing Parliament. The Speaker addressed Her Majesty in the name of the Commons, giving her an account of the work of the session. He referred to the vigorous and decisive measures which had been adopted for the pacification of Canada, and “to the large and extensive powers given to the Governor in council,” which were to be exercised under her control, and on the responsibility of her ministers. He spoke at considerable length on the Irish Poor Law Act, remarking, “If the execution of this most important law shall be watched over and guided by the same prudent and impartial spirit which governed our deliberations in its enactment, we confidently hope that the benefit which it is calculated to confer will be gradually developed.” Referring to the Irish Tithe Act, and the Acts for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt in certain cases, for abridging pluralities, and for making better provision for the residence of the clergy, he said, “In passing these measures, we have again recorded our conviction that the surest way to maintain respect for our laws and attachment to our institutions is by gradually introducing such amendments as are most likely to recommend them to the improving opinions and increasing knowledge of the educated classes of the community.”

The Queen having given the royal assent to a series of bills, read, in a clear, distinct voice, the speech from the throne, expressing satisfaction at the amendment of the

domestic institutions of the country, the mitigations of the law, and the Irish measures. Concerning the Irish Poor Law, she observed, "I cherish the expectation that its provisions have been so cautiously framed, and will be so prudently executed, that while they contribute to relieve distress they will tend to preserve order, and to encourage habits of industry and exertion." Concerning the Irish Tithe Bill, she remarked, "I trust, likewise, that the act which you have passed, relating to the composition for tithe in Ireland, will increase the security of that property, and promote internal peace." To the gentlemen of the House of Commons she said, "I cannot sufficiently thank you for your dispatch and liberality in providing for the expenses of my household, and the maintenance of the honour and dignity of the crown. I offer you my warmest acknowledgments for the addition you have made to the income of my beloved mother."

In a review of the session given the same day by Sir Robert Inglis, he stated that it had been one of almost unexampled duration and toil. He found that the house had sat 173 days, of which not less than 1,134 hours had been occupied in public business. It was the longest session, save one, in the present century. In the first session, of George IV. the house sat only 111 days, and in the first of William IV. only eighty-four days. He thought that the country would regard with satisfaction this proof of their zeal and devotion; but he lamented the number of bills brought in at a late season, when it was utterly impossible to deal with them, no less than sixty-four having been presented after the 1st of July.

We have already alluded to the care taken by Lord Melbourne in instructing and guiding the youthful Queen in discharging the duties of her high office. This extraordinary devotion, however, was the subject of constant remark in political circles during this first year of Her Majesty's reign. It was said that the incessant attendance of the prime minister upon his Sovereign was not quite becoming his position. It was stated that he became to all intents an inmate of her palace, and a companion of her court. This state of things called forth a pamphlet, in the form of a letter addressed to the Queen, which excited a good deal of notice at the time. The writer says:—"Downing Street and Whitehall are no longer the resort of the cabinet. The official residences are deserted, and one palace holds the Sovereign and the servants of the public. This novel, and inconvenient, and not very seemly excess of royal favour is at once injurious to the public service, and personally advantageous to the ministry. For although it must necessarily prevent them from attending to the duties of their several departments, and thus make them far worse ministers than they might, by more diligence and harder work, become, they care mighty little for this, provided they gain a further hold of your mind, and show the country more strikingly how unbounded is their influence. Whatever business they may transact beyond the royal promenades must needs be transacted in writing. When you return to London some months hence, no doubt part of this serious evil will be removed, but only part. The Minis-

ters will be in London, and we will be no longer governed by course of post; yet the chief among them will have their whole time divided between sleeping and attendance at your palace: no time for calm discussions; none for careful preparation of dispatches and other state papers; none for meditation, to form and enlarge their views on the great questions that occur, none for reading."

CHAPTER XLIII.

Trades Combinations—Strike of the Cotton Spinners' Association at Glasgow—Arrest of the Secret Committee—Organised Assassination—Oath of the Association—The Cotton Spinners' Trial—The Policy of Strikes; Encouraged by the Masters; their General Success—The Darg—English Parties—Ireland the Cardinal Point of English Politics—Meeting of Parliament—The Queen's Speech—Illegal Meetings—Chartism; its Rise and Progress—The Six Points—Speech of Mr. Stephens—Communism—The Chartist Petition—Chartist Demonstrations—Grand Moral Demonstration on Kersal Moor—Chartist Propositions—Chartist Riots at Birmingham—Arrest of Dr. Taylor—More Riots at Birmingham—Chartist Meetings at Manchester—Forced Contributions—Letter of the Home Secretary—The Sacred Month Abandoned—Meeting at Kennington Common—Chartist Trials at Chester—Trial of Mr. Stephens—Dissolution of the National Convention—The Monmouth Insurrection—Frost, Williams, and Jones—Trial and Sentence of the Prisoners.

It has been well remarked by a Conservative historian that "combinations are the natural resource of the weak against the strong, of the poor against the rich, the oppressed against the oppressors." They have been known in all countries, and in all ages, and have often rendered important services to society. Their natural tendency, however, and, in fact, the condition of their existence, is the bringing the great body of the combined persons under the control of a few ambitious leaders, who are generally as unscrupulous in their measures as they are eminent for their abilities. The system of combination had spread very widely in 1837 and 1838. So great was the terrorism produced, that conviction for an outrage was very rare. The utmost precautions were taken to prevent discovery in committing assassination. Strangers were sent to a great distance for the purpose; and even if they were detected, few persons would run the risk of coming forward as witnesses. The consequence was that in nine cases out of ten combination murders were perpetrated with impunity. In 1837 the great Cotton Spinners' Association at Glasgow struck, to prevent a reduction of wages in consequence of the mercantile embarrassments arising from the commercial crash in the United States. This association had its branches all over Scotland and the north of England. During sixteen years a total of £200,000 had passed through its hands. So extensive was it in its ramifications, that when it struck in the spring of 1837, no less than 50,000 persons, including the families of the workers, were deprived of the means of existence, and reduced to the last degree of destitution. Crowds of angry workmen paraded the streets and gathered round the factory gates, to prevent other people from going in to work; fire-balls were thrown into the mills for the purpose of burning them. At length the members of the association went so far as

THE DEATH OF THOM, *alias* SIR WILLIAM COURTENAY.

to shoot one of the new hands in open day in a public street of Glasgow. In consequence of this outrage, the sheriff of Lanarkshire proceeded with a body of twenty policemen and arrested the members of the secret committee, sixteen in number, who were found assembled in a garret, to which they obtained access by a trap-ladder, in Gallowgate of that city. This was on Saturday night, August 3rd. "On the Monday following the strike was at an end, and all the mills in Glasgow were going; so entirely are these calamitous associations the result of terror, inspired in the enslaved multitude by a few daring and unscrupulous leaders."*

On the cotton-spinners' trial which followed, there was a full exposure given by the members of the secrets of the organisation, and the terrible machinery by which the decrees of the secret tribunal were carried into execution. It appeared that when a strike had lasted a considerable time without producing the desired result of forcing the employers into submission, the workmen of different factories engaged in the union were summoned by the committee to send delegates to a place of meeting, in order to appoint a secret select committee. Two were summoned from each factory, and there were thirty-seven then at Glasgow. It was perfectly well understood that the object of this committee was to organise violence, intimidation, and outrage. When the delegates assembled, each wrote upon a slip of paper the names of the persons he voted for to form the "secret select," which consisted of five persons. The slips were folded up and given to the secretary, who immediately dissolved the meeting, without announcing the names, which were known only to himself. In the evening he called on the persons who had the majority of votes, and informed them of their election. When it was deemed expedient to perpetrate an assault, or an assassination, an anonymous letter was sent to the person whom the committee had selected out of "No. 61," the division which contained those desperate characters who hired themselves for such purposes. This person came to the appointed place in obedience to the summons. Ushered into a dark room, he was told by one of the members what was to be done—the nature of the assault, whether throwing vitriol into the eyes or committing murder. He was told to put forth his hand and take what he could reach. He put a sum of money into his pocket, and departed to fulfil his mission, lying in wait for his victim till a good opportunity presented itself. Thus a victim fell no one knew by whom, nor could any workman under ban feel sure that he himself would not be the next. When the crime was committed, the perpetrator obtained the means of emigrating, and there was an end of the matter. Even if the assassin informed, he would not be able to identify his employers. So quickly do men become familiar with deeds of blood under such circumstances, and so eager for fresh sensations of horror, that some of the witnesses stated on the cotton-spinners' trial that the members' every morning asked one another, "Why was nothing

done last night?" "What did you mean by nothing being done?" "Why was no one murdered by the committee?" It was moved at a general meeting, June 15th, 1837, by William Johnstone, and carried unanimously, that the names of all who remained "nobs" (*new hands*) at the end of the strike should be enrolled in a book, printed, and sent to all the spinning districts in Scotland, England, and Ireland, and that they remain "nobs" for ever; and a "persecuting committee" be appointed to persecute them to the utter most. The oath taken by the members of the association bound them to execute with zeal and alacrity every task and injunction which the majority of their brethren should impose upon them in furtherance of their common welfare—"as the chastisement of 'nobs,' the assassination of oppressors or tyrannical masters, or the demolition of shops that shall be deemed incorrigible;" and also that they would cheerfully contribute to the support of such of their brethren as should lose their work "in consequence of their exertions against tyranny."

Sir Archibald Alison, who was the sheriff that arrested the committee, and who therefore speaks from personal knowledge, thus describes the circumstances attending the trial:—"First, a printed placard was widely posted in every manufacturing town of Great Britain and Ireland, on the same day, denouncing the conduct of the sheriff of Lanarkshire in apprehending the committee as tyrannical in the highest degree, and calling on all the combined trades to co-operate in defeating the measure. Next, that magistrate was assailed by anonymous letters three or four times a week, from the time of the apprehension till the trial came on, five months after, from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, threatening him with instant death if the accused persons were not immediately liberated. The Crown witnesses, eleven in number, were so threatened that, on their own petition, they were committed to gaol till the trial, and then sent out of the country at the public expense. At the trial, which lasted six days, the utmost efforts to disturb the course of justice were made. Five-and-twenty jurors were challenged by the prisoners—not one by the Crown. A crowd of two or three thousand Unionists surrounded the court every evening when the trial was adjourned, which at length increased to such a degree that five thousand persons were assembled, and military assistance had to be sent for. Under these circumstances, it was hardly to be expected that a verdict according to evidence could be obtained. The jury found the prisoners guilty of conspiracy, and they were sentenced to transportation, but the murder not proven—a result which excited some surprise, as the evidence was thought to have warranted a general verdict of guilty. This was, two years after, followed by their being all liberated from confinement by Lord Normanby, then Home Secretary."

The effects of this trial were of a permanent character; the excesses to which combinations might lead, if guided by ignorance and passion, were perceived by all, especially when the evidence taken on the subject by a parliament-

* Alison, vol. vi., p. 301.

tary committee was published. No legislative measures were, however, considered necessary; and, though strikes have from time to time since occurred, their leaders have always deprecated acts of intimidation and outrage; and the good sense and increased enlightenment of the working classes have, in such cases, generally preserved them from a violation of the laws. One of the consequences of strikes is the substitution of machinery for manual labour;—that of the cotton spinners led to the adoption of self-acting mules, which, by rendering male operatives almost unnecessary, has put an end altogether to strikes in that branch of manufacture.

Sir Archibald Alison makes some important admissions with regard to the policy of strikes, and gives some curious information about their origin, which throw a good deal of light on the question of combinations. Government, in general, does not trouble itself about strikes, because they are not directed against itself, and because these "local disorders" do not immediately threaten the exchequer. No religious party heeds them much, because they involve nothing polemical, and are concerned about temporal interests. Landed proprietors shun the discussion, lest they should terminate in assessment. "But," says Sir Archibald Alison, "the working classes cling to them as their palladium, their Magna Charta, and regard them as the only means within their power of making wages rise in proportion to the profits of trade and the requirements of their families. Even the masters employing the combined workmen are far from being averse to strikes; on the contrary, they sometimes secretly encourage, generally largely profit by them. The cessation of production in any branch of trade of course makes the stock in hand more valuable; and it is often no small comfort to them, when a monetary crisis has occurred, and prices are generally falling, to see the value of their own article continually rising, while, at the same time, they are relieved from the disagreeable necessity, during a period of disaster, of paying their workmen wages." It is stated, in illustration of this fact, that during the great colliers' and miners' strikes in 1856, in Scotland, one coalmaster cleared £20,000 by a mass of dross, which before it began was absolutely unsaleable, and another £25,000 by the same means, the price of coals having, at the same time, risen from 12s. 6d. to 25s. a ton.

This mode of obtaining redress, by which the workmen endeavour to counteract, by their united efforts, the advantage which the employer possesses over them by his capital and his influence, is found to be, in the majority of cases, successful. The mechanic, it is true, suffers great privations during the struggle, and great loss is often entailed by it on society—the strike of the cotton spinners referred to cost the country £230,000, and that of the colliers in Lanarkshire £400,000; but in the end, he generally gains the victory. In a great number of cases, the majority of which are never known to the public, the master succumbs: impelled, at least, by a sense of his own interest, which is frequently affected in a serious manner by the contest. If the markets

are rising, and he is allowed a reasonable margin for profit, he yields without much difficulty; but if the market is falling, it is otherwise—production is then far more important to the workman than to him, and he may endeavour to hold out until the resources of his opponents are exhausted. The legislature, by repealing the laws against combination in 1824, has admitted the principle, that workpeople have a right to enter into a mutual agreement not to work for less than certain wages, nor more than a certain number of hours in the day or the week; but, while this is most justly permitted to them, they are not allowed to influence others by force or intimidation, since this would subvert the very foundations of society, and not only injure the manufacturer, but in the end ruin the workman himself. The change, however, which has taken place in the mode of conducting disputes between operatives and their employers of late years, is evidently due to the superior enlightenment which is at present observable among the working classes, and which is a consequence of the increased facilities afforded for mental culture. This augmentation of intellectual power has led, as a natural result, to the workman understanding better both his own rights, and the legitimate methods of enforcing them. Some remains indeed, of the mistakes formerly made, and the injustice once practised, in the attempt to control others, still exist—for example, the regulations among the colliers and miners called *darg*. The workman is prevented by it from raising, in a day, a larger quantity of mineral than could be easily raised by the inexperienced or unskilful; the very best is thus reduced to a level with the worst, and he is obliged to be content with little more than half the amount which he could easily earn.

The chronic state of English parties since the passing of the Reform Bill may be expressed thus—The Whigs able to hold office, and the Tories able to prevent their making any use of it for the benefit of the country. While Sir Robert Peel lived, his judgment and moderation, his loyalty and patriotism, restrained the party spirit that animated the opposition. In this he was steadily supported by all the weight of the Duke of Wellington's great character; and with their assistance ministers were enabled to overcome from time to time, but only to a partial extent, the difficulties which beset legislation in such an evenly balanced state of parties. But if the progress of useful legislation was thus impeded, movements or rash and dangerous innovation were at the same time arrested. The power of obstruction which the Conservatives possessed might in other hands have been employed to the great detriment of the country. But there was this restraint always operating upon both Whigs and Tories in opposition, that the leaders in each case hoped to be shortly able to pass over to the Treasury benches, and they did not wish to commit themselves to any course which would fetter their action when in power. This state of things was rendered more perplexing by the condition of Ireland, and its relation to the two political parties. A public writer in 1839 truthfully remarked:—

"Ireland is still the cardinal point of English domestic politics. At this moment their government of that part of the empire may be said to form at once the strength and the weakness of the present ministers. On the other hand, we believe the warmest friends of Sir Robert Peel cannot but entertain some misgiving as to the manner in which, on his return to power, he would be able to deal with that part of our public administration. One thing, indeed, seems certain—if it be an anti-papal or anti-Irish cry that brings him into office, the necessary reaction of it on the sister island will make it hardly possible that he will retain it long. The experience of every year affords fresh evidence how impossible it is for this country to continue the government, even of its remotest dependency, on principles unpopular with the mass of the inhabitants. Nothing, therefore, can be more wild than the imagination that the connection of Ireland with Great Britain can be maintained on any other than grounds of mutual interest and goodwill. The only alternative is a military occupation, which, if there were no higher objection to such a measure, would be demonstrably not worth the trouble and expense of it. We do not dissemble to ourselves the many and grave sacrifices which under the happiest circumstances must attend the solution of this political problem; but it should be remembered that grievous as they may be, it is not for England to complain of them. Her connection with Ireland originated in conquest, and for centuries was maintained only by force of arms. For the embarrassments, therefore, which yet beset that relation, she is herself properly and exclusively responsible; and, indeed, may be said to be only now suffering the rightful retribution which sooner or later ever follows the infliction of wrong."

Parliament had been summoned to meet on the 16th of February, and on that day the session was opened by the Queen in person. She lamented the continuance of the civil war in Spain, but on another subject she had a very gratifying announcement to make. "It is," said Her Majesty, "with the greatest satisfaction that I am enabled to inform you that throughout the whole of my West Indian possessions the period fixed by law for the final and complete emancipation of the negroes has been anticipated by acts of the Colonial Legislatures, and that the transition from the temporary system of apprenticeship to entire freedom has taken place without any disturbance of public order and tranquillity. Any measures which may be necessary in order to give full effect to this great and beneficial change, will, I have no doubt, receive your careful attention."

The concluding paragraph of the speech referred to the disturbances and combinations among the working classes. "I have observed with pain," she said, "the persevering efforts which have been made in some parts of the country to excite my subjects to disobedience and resistance to the law, and to recommend dangerous and illegal practices. For the counteraction of all such designs, I depend upon the efficacy of the law, which it will be my duty to enforce, upon the good sense and

right disposition of my people, upon their attachment to the principles of justice, and their abhorrence of violence and disorder."

In the debate on the address in the Lords, the Duke of Wellington directed particular attention to this subject. "I could wish Her Majesty's Ministers, and the noblemen who are in the habit of supporting them, to attend most particularly to this subject. It is, indeed, but too true that such efforts have been continually made to excite Her Majesty's subjects to resistance to the laws. But, in connection with this fact, let me remind you of a discussion which took place in Parliament on a former occasion, when noble lords, and one high in office, came down and insisted with the utmost warmth upon the indispensable necessity of not interfering with what they described as the rights of the people, demanding that no restriction whatever should be thrown on their right to assemble in large bodies; which dangerous doctrine was not even limited by the rule laid down by the law of the land, that such assemblies must not be in numbers sufficient to create alarm in the community. Remember, too, that at the very moment when the noble lord at the head of the Home Department was proclaiming a doctrine of that kind, in its fullest extent, at a meeting at Liverpool, large crowds of men were alarming the country by torch-light meetings."

In the course of the debate in the Commons, Sir Robert Peel adverted to the paragraph referring to illegal meetings. Having read several extracts from the speeches of Mr. Stephens, Dr. Wade, and Mr. Feargus O'Connor delivered at Chartist meetings, he quoted, for the purpose of reprehending, a speech delivered by Lord John Russell at Liverpool in the previous month of October, when, alluding to the Chartist meeting, the noble lord said, "There are some perhaps who would put down such meetings, but such was not his opinion, nor that of the Government with which he acted. He thought the people had a right to free discussion which elicited truth. They had a right to meet. If they had no grievances, common sense would speedily come to the rescue, and put an end to these meetings." These sentiments, remarked Sir Robert Peel, might be just, and even truisms; yet the unseasonable expression of truth in times of public excitement was often dangerous. The Reform Bill, he said, had failed to give permanent satisfaction as he had throughout predicted would be the case, and he well knew that a concession of further reform, in the expectation of producing satisfaction or finality, would be only aggravating the disappointment, and that in a few years they would be encountered by further demands.

It was during the year 1838 that the Chartists became an organised body. The working classes had strenuously supported the middle classes in obtaining their political rights during the agitation for the Reform Bill, and they expected to receive help in their turn to obtain political franchises for themselves, but they found Parliament indifferent or hostile to any further changes in the representation, while the middle-class, satisfied

with their own acquisitions, were not inclined to exert themselves much for the extension of political rights among the masses. The discontent and disappointment of the latter were aggravated by a succession of bad harvests, setting in about 1835. The hardships of their condition, with scanty employment and dear provisions, the people ascribed to their want of direct influence upon the Government. This gave rise to a vigorous agitation for the extension of the franchise, which was carried on for ten years. In 1838 a committee of six members of Parliament and six working men prepared a bill embodying their demands. This was called the "People's Charter." Its points were six in number:—First, the extension of the right of voting to every male native of the United Kingdom, and every naturalised foreigner resident in the kingdom for more than two years, who should be twenty-one years of age, of sound mind, and unconvicted of crime; second, equal electoral districts; third, vote by ballot; fourth, annual Parliaments; fifth, no property qualification for members; sixth, payment of members of Parliament for their services.

This programme was received with great enthusiasm, being adopted by acclamation at monster meetings, which in some places numbered hundreds of thousands. "Fiery orators," says a popular writer, "fanned the popular excitement, and under the guidance of the extreme party among their leaders, physical force was soon spoken of as the only means of obtaining justice. The more moderate and thoughtful of the Chartists were overruled by the fanatical and turbulent spirits; and the people, already roused by sufferings, were easily wrought into frenzy by those who assumed the direction of their movements."

The style of the oratory which prevailed at those monster meetings may be inferred from an extract from a speech by the Rev. Mr. Stephens, a Nonconformist minister, who expounded the charter in the following strain:—"The principle of the people's charter," he said, "was the right of every man that breathed God's free air, or trod God's free earth, to have his home and his hearth, and to have happiness to himself, his wife, and his children, as securely guaranteed to him as they are to every man whom the Almighty had created. The question of universal suffrage was, after all, 'a knife and fork' question. If any man asked him what he meant by universal suffrage, he would tell him he meant to say that every working man in the land had a right to have a good coat and hat, a good roof over his head, a good dinner upon his table, no more work than would keep him in health, and as much wages as would keep him in plenty, and the enjoyment of those pleasures of life which a reasonable man could desire. I am speaking," he continued, "to hundreds of thousands, three out of four of whom have, in all likelihood, left their arms at home to-day. And why have you left them at home? Because you were afraid to bring them? (Cries of 'No! no!') Why, then, have you left them behind? Why, because the borough reeve and constables of Manchester have declared that they repose the fullest confidence in the peaceable and loyal character of the people. If they had not made that declaration, I

should have come myself armed to this meeting. I should have brought 10,000 armed men with me; I should have moved, had there been a necessity for it, an adjournment of this meeting for a month; and I should have exhorted every man in the country capable of bearing arms to flock to his standard, and under it to fight the battles of the constitution."

There is no mistaking the *socialistic* character of these sentiments. The idea of Mr. Stephens could not be realised without the destruction of the rights of individual property—without having goods in common; and this, as all experiments have proved, would lead to national bankruptcy and universal poverty. The agitation became so alarming, however, that Mr. Stephens was indicted, and held to bail on a charge of sedition. But this interference with liberty of speech served only to inflame the excitement, and to render the language of the orators more violent. In June, 1839, Mr. Attwood presented the Chartist petition to the House of Commons, bearing 1,200,000 signatures, and on the 15th of July he moved that it should be referred to a select committee, but the motion was rejected by a majority of 289 to 281. This gave a fresh impulse to the agitation. The most inflammatory speakers besides Mr. Stephens were Mr. Oastler and Mr. Feargus O'Connor. The use of arms began to be freely spoken of as a legitimate means of obtaining their rights. Pikes and guns were procured in great quantities; drilling was practised, and armed bands marched in nocturnal processions, to the terror of the peaceable inhabitants. At length, Lord John Russell, as Home Secretary, reluctant as he was to interfere with the free action of the people, issued a proclamation to the lieutenants of the disturbed counties, authorising them to accept the armed assistance of persons who might place themselves at their disposal for the preservation of the public peace. As a means of showing their numerical strength, the Chartists adopted the plan of going round from house to house with two books, demanding subscriptions for the support of the Charter, entering the names of subscribers in one book, and of non-subscribers in the other. Each subscriber received a ticket, which was to be his protection in case of insurrection, while the non-subscribers were given to understand that their names would be remembered. Another striking mode of demonstrating their power and producing an impression, though not the most agreeable one, was to go in procession to the churches on Sunday some time before Divine service began, and to take entire possession of the body of the edifice. They conducted themselves quietly, however, although some were guilty of the impropriety of wearing their hats and smoking pipes.

Early in the year the Chartist associations in different parts of the kingdom proceeded to the election of deputies, in order to form a national convention, which was to sit in different places, and to have the supreme direction of the movement. All the earlier sessions of this body were held in London, where it was occupied in superintending the signing of the national petition, which was presented by Mr. Attwood on the 14th of

June, as already stated. A peculiarity in this popular movement was that it was directed against the middle classes, and was impelled by hostility to capitalists. It was for this reason, it is said, that the Chartists set their faces in every possible way against the numerous meetings for the abolition of the Corn Laws, which took place contemporaneously with their own assemblages at the commencement of the current year. They believed that any diminution of the duty on corn would lower wages, and turn to the profit of the employer alone. On the 25th of May there was a grand moral demonstration of the working classes of South Lancashire, held in favour of the people's charter, upon Kersal Moor, four miles from Manchester. The magistrates, apprehending a breach of the peace, issued a notice, in which they earnestly recommended all well-disposed persons to abstain from attending the meeting, warning them of the dangerous tendency of the contemplated proceedings. Several regiments of soldiers were in readiness to act, but fortunately their services were not required, as the meeting passed off very quietly. The public journals at the time stated that the Chartists present on this occasion did not exceed 30,000, and that they seemed to be confined almost wholly to the lowest of the operative classes; but they admit that an equal number were drawn by curiosity to witness the proceedings, or to join in the sports on the moor. The Chartists arrived in processions along the different roads from Manchester, Hyde, Ashton, Bury, Rochdale, Middleton, Bolton, and other places. They were preceded by bands of music and banners, bearing inscriptions and descriptive mottoes, such as the following—"Universal suffrage;" "Annual parliaments;" "Vote by ballot;" "Abolition of white slavery;" "We have set our lives upon a cast, and will stand the hazard of the die;" "Universal suffrage, or death;" "United we stand, divided we fall;" "We know our rights, and we will have them;" "The rights of man;" "Tyrants tremble, for the people are awake;" "Reason no longer with tyrants—man has but once to die;" "No corn laws," &c. Dr. Fletcher, of Bury, was called to the chair, and proceeded to state the purposes for which the meeting was convened. They were expressed in the following propositions, which he read to the meeting:—

"Whether they will be prepared, at the request of the convention, to withdraw all sums of money they may, individually or collectively, have placed in savings banks, or in the hands of any persons hostile to their just rights? Whether, at the same request, they will be prepared immediately to convert all their paper money into gold and silver? Whether, if the convention shall determine that a sacred month will be necessary to prepare the millions to secure the charter of their political salvation, they will firmly resolve to abstain from their labours during that period, as well as from the use of all intoxicating drinks? Whether, according to their old constitutional right—a right which modern legislators would fain annihilate—they have provided themselves with arms of freedom to defend the laws and constitutional privileges that their ancestors bequeathed

to them? Whether they will provide themselves with Chartist candidates, so as to be prepared to propose them for their representatives at the next general election; and if returned by show of hands, such candidates do consider themselves veritable representatives of the people, to meet in London at a time hereafter to be determined on? Whether they will resolve to deal exclusively with Chartists; and in all cases of persecution rally round and protect all those who may suffer for their righteous cause?"

In submitting these propositions, the chairman observed that the people had £13,000,000 in the savings banks, and if they would only withdraw at the present crisis £1,000,000 it would be sufficient to achieve their liberties; and as to the proposition to take up arms, Lord John Russell had proved himself a statesman on that point, by admitting the right. Mr. Feargus O'Connor declared that he was there that day because the magistrates had said that this was an illegal meeting; he was there because the proclamation of the Queen had said it was an unconstitutional meeting. "A proclamation," he said, "should only be resorted to at the last extremity, when there was no opportunity of strengthening the law; and why, on such anticipation, did Parliament adjourn at this period over an unusual length of time? They could not apprehend any danger, or else they were a pack of poltroon cowards, that had left their post, and thrown the shame upon our young Queen. Never did the Queen look so lovely in his eyes as upon the present occasion, because, when surrounded by two sets of vagabond factions, and the Tories were making their arrangements for substituting a shooting Government for a cowardly Government, she dismissed them. He had good authority for asserting that all the Hanoverian clubs of London were at work to know how they could dispose of our young Queen, and to substitute a bloody Cumberland in her place. But, if that fellow were upon the throne, he would himself put on a red coat at once, and he should have no hesitation in advising the people to revolt—it would be their duty—against the factions, and in favour of our constitutional monarchy."

Mr. Rushton, of Manchester, declared that it was the last of their meetings until they were prepared to congratulate them on the recovery of their rights. The day was at hand when the Government and aristocracy would compel them to meet in a manner that would result in the eternal happiness of the people and the eternal ruin of their enemies. Lord John Russell had offered to supply a certain portion of the people with arms; he advised them, therefore, to go to the constables in their various neighbourhoods and demand arms, and to swear allegiance to the Queen. Let them swear at the altar of their God that rather than suffer the wives of their bosoms to be torn from them, they would suffer death. The propositions read from the chair were severally proposed and adopted, and the meeting peaceably dispersed.

Other meetings, however, were held in various places, which ended in disturbance, the most serious of which

occurred at Birmingham. The inhabitants of this town had been kept in a state of almost incessant alarm by the proceedings of disorderly persons calling themselves Chartists. Representations to this effect having been sent to the Home Office, sixty picked men of the metropolitan force were sent down to aid the civil authorities in the preservation of peace. They arrived at Birmingham by the railway on Thursday, July 4th, and speedily mustering, they marched two abreast into the Bull-ring, where about 2,000 Chartists were assembled, at nine o'clock in the evening. They endeavoured, at first, to induce the meeting quietly to disperse, but failed in the attempt. They then seized the flags with which Lord Nelson's monument in the centre of the square was decorated, and among which was one that bore a death's head; but the Chartists, who had at first been disconcerted, recaptured them, after a desperate struggle, and broke their staves into pieces, to be used as clubs. A conflict immediately ensued, in which the police, who were armed only with their batons, were seriously injured; and the Chartists were retiring in triumph, when the 4th Dragoons charged them, by concert, through all the streets leading to the Bull-ring, and they fled in every direction. The cavalry pursued; and though the rioters attempted, for a moment, to make a stand in Bromsgrove Street, where they tore up the palisades for weapons, they were completely dispersed. All was quiet by midnight; and the military, having placed a guard in the great square, retired to their barracks. Ten persons were arrested, and committed to Warwick gaol; and among them Dr. John Taylor, who was dressed in the insignia which belonged to his position among the Chartists, and who was liberated the next day, upon Feargus O'Connor and a pawnbroker of Birmingham, named Smith, entering into sureties to the amount of £250 each, for his appearance at the ensuing Warwick Assizes. Messrs. Lovett and Collins were also brought before the magistrates at nine o'clock, p.m., charged with publishing a scandalous and malicious libel, entitled, "Resolutions unanimously agreed to by the General Convention," and signed, "W. Lovett, secretary." The following is the document in question:—"That this convention is of opinion that a wanton, flagrant, and unjust outrage has been made upon the people of Birmingham by a blood-thirsty and unconstitutional force from London, acting under the authority of men who, when out of office, sanctioned and took part in the meetings of the people; and now, when they share in the public plunder, seek to keep the people in social and political degradation. That the people of Birmingham are the best judges of their own right to meet in the Bull-ring, or elsewhere; have their own feelings to consult respecting the outrage given, and are the best judges of their own power to obtain justice. That the summary and despotic arrest of Dr. Taylor, our respected colleague, affords another convincing proof of the absence of all justice in England, and clearly shows that there is no security for life, liberty, or property, till the people have some control over the laws they are called upon to obey."

The two prisoners were committed on their own statements. On the Monday following large crowds of people assembled in different parts of the town. The military were again called out in aid of the police, and a skirmish ensued. The next day, the people, having been denied the town hall for holding a public meeting, assembled at Holloway End. The rifles were ordered to disperse them; the people resisted, and began to pelt the military with stones. The order to load and make ready was given, when, the 4th Dragoons having made their appearance: the fatal word "fire" was fortunately not given, as the crowds at once dispersed. Several prisoners were arrested, and brought in under escort. All apprehension of further disturbance seemed now at an end; but the magistrates indulged in a false sense of security. On the 15th of July the mayor remained at the public office until five o'clock in the evening, and then went to his residence, a mile out of town. One of the magistrates was near the Bull-ring at a quarter past eight, and all was quiet. But "the sacred month" had commenced, during which the Chartists had bound themselves to abstain from working. Having nothing to do but listen to inflammatory speeches, and brood over their defeat by the dragoons, they were burning for an opportunity of showing their power once more, which was furnished by the expected return of Messrs. Collins and Lovett from prison. They accordingly assembled in large crowds in the Bull-ring, when they were irritated by some collisions with the police, in which two men were severely wounded. In order to avoid further irritation, the police were called into the yard of the police office, out of the gaze of the people, but this had not the desired effect. About eight o'clock the mob commenced breaking the windows of the office, and flinging stones into the yard. Shortly after they began to break the windows and large lamps in High Street and Spiral Street. They next attacked the houses, for which purpose they armed themselves with the iron palisade surrounding the Nelson monument. They broke into the warehouses, flinging their contents into the streets—tea, sugar, spices, tobacco, cheese, brushes, leather, cutlery, jewellery, &c. A large pile of bedding was set on fire in the Bull-ring. The windows and the shop-fittings were remorselessly demolished by the infuriated multitude. A few minutes past nine o'clock the cry of "fire!" was raised. Scarcely had the words been uttered when the rioters carried immense heaps of burning materials from the streets, forcing them into the houses of Mr. Bourne and Mr. Legatt. Within a quarter of an hour the flames burst out with awful violence from both houses, amidst the exulting shouts of the rioters. While this work of destruction was going on, they had the streets to themselves. The general cry among the inhabitants was, "Where are the military? Where are the magistrates?" At length, about ten o'clock, sixty of the metropolitan police, with a posse of special constables, made their appearance, and rushed upon the rioters sword in hand, causing them to fly in all directions. The dragoons, under the command of Colonel Chatterton, were now discerned galloping down Moore Street, and another squadron at the same moment down

High Street, and in five minutes about 300 of the rifle brigade marched to the Bull-ring. The inhabitants, feeling like people sore pressed by a long siege, clapped their hands with joy at the approach of their deliverers. The fire engines also came under escort, having been driven away before, and set about arresting the conflagration. In the meantime the cavalry were scouring and clearing the streets and suburbs, and the police were busily engaged bringing in prisoners. About midnight the roofs of the two houses had fallen in, and about one o'clock the fire was got under. Next day the shops were nearly all closed, the middle classes full of suspicion, and the populace vowing vengeance against the police and the soldiers. A piece of artillery placed at the

House of Lords, the Duke of Wellington said, "That he had seen as much of war as most men; but he had never seen a town carried by assault, subjected to such violence as Birmingham had been during an hour by its own inhabitants."

The excitement was kept up during the summer and autumn by meetings held in various places, and the arrest of persons taking a prominent part in the proceedings. On the 4th of August there was an evening meeting at Manchester held in Stephenson's Square, when about 5,000 persons attended. The object was to determine whether "the sacred month" should commence on the 12th of August or not. Mr. Butterworth, who moved the first resolution, said he considered that



MR. FEARGUS O'CONNOR.

head of High Street contributed materially to prevent further disturbance. About twenty prisoners were made, and the evidence produced before the magistrates showed the determined purpose of the rioters. Penny editions of Colonel Macerone's book on street and house-fighting were extensively circulated. A large quantity of pikes had been seized, and it was avowed that the destruction of property was part of the plan. The rioters said they did not wish to injure any person, but they were resolved to make the rich as poor as themselves. It is a singular fact, that throughout the whole of those violent proceedings no one was killed; though two persons were dangerously wounded. When these outrages were the subject of discussion in the

the Chartists of 1839 were the Whigs of 1832, and the Whigs of 1839 were the Tories of 1832. The Whigs were more violent then than the Chartists now, and yet the Whigs were the very men to punish the Chartists. During the meeting persons in the crowd continued to discharge firearms. It went off, however, without any disturbance of the public peace. In connection with the observance of "the sacred month," or the national holidays, it was expected that the Chartists and their families could live by extorting daily contributions from the middle classes, who had been compelled to subscribe to the national defence fund, on pain of Chartist penalties, the nature of which may be inferred from the following letter, sent by the Home Secretary, Lord

John Russell, to the magistrates of Manchester and the neighbourhood. As an historical document, it will throw some light on the state of society at the time :—

"Gentlemen,—Having been informed that in some parts of the kingdom attempts have lately been made to obtain money from shopkeepers, householders, and others, by means of intimidation (as by threatening them with personal danger, or with loss of business, or threatening to mark them down and report them as enemies, and by various other illegal means), and that persons have been combining and endeavouring to injure shopkeepers, householders, and others, in their lawful business, representing them as enemies to the people, and persuading others to leave off trading with them, thereby to prejudice them in their business; having been also informed that persons, in pursuance of an illegal combination, have gone about among the working classes of the people, exciting and endeavouring to persuade them to desist from working, and to desert their employers; I deem it to be my duty to call upon the magistrates to use their utmost endeavours to repress and put down such mischievous practices, which are contrary to law, injurious to trade, subversive of good order, and dangerous to the peace of the country; and to apprehend and bring the offenders to justice. I advise the magistrates to proceed against persons guilty of such illegal practices as for a misdemeanour. In case, also, persons should assemble, and go about in numbers to deter others of the working classes from pursuing their lawful business, or creating terror and alarm, I advise the magistrates to repress all such unlawful proceedings, and to bring the offenders to justice. The magistrates may be assured that, in the discharge of this and every other duty, they will be promptly and efficiently supported by Her Majesty's Government. I feel confident that Her Majesty's loyal and well-disposed subjects will, on their part, be ready at all times to give prompt and effectual assistance to magistrates in their endeavours to preserve the public peace."

Previous to the 12th of August the delegates of the National Convention met at the Arundel Coffee House, in the Strand, when they passed a series of resolutions to the effect that they were unanimously of opinion the people were not prepared to carry out "the sacred month" on that day; but they were of opinion that they might be induced to cease work on the 12th for two or three days, "in order to devote the whole of that time to solemn processions and meetings for deliberating on the present awful state of the country, and devising the best means of averting the hideous despotism with which the industrious orders are menaced by the murderous majority of the upper and middle classes, who prey upon their labours." They proceed thus :—"We at the same time beg to announce to the country, that it is the deliberate opinion of this council, that unless the trades of Great Britain shall co-operate as united bodies with their more distressed brethren, in making a grand national and moral demonstration on the 12th instant, it will be impossible to save the country from a

revolution of blood, which, after enormous sacrifices of life and property, will terminate in the utter subjection of the whole of the working people to the moneyed murderers of society. Under these circumstances, we implore all our brother Chartists to abandon the project of 'a sacred month,' as being for the present utterly impracticable, and to prepare themselves forthwith to carry into effect the aforesaid constitutional objects on the 12th instant. We also implore the united trades, if they would save the country from convulsion, and themselves and families from ruin, to render their distressed brethren all the aid in their power, on or before the 12th instant, towards realising the great and beneficial object of this holy day. Men of the trades! the salvation of the empire is in your hands."

Placards containing these resolutions were posted about Manchester and other towns in the north of England. The appeal was generally responded to. There were collisions with the police in different places—at Manchester, Salford, Heywood, Macclesfield, Boston, Nottingham, Sheffield, and Rochdale. At Chester 600 special constables were sworn in, and the garrison was held in readiness for suppressing an apprehended riot, but none occurred. The 12th was observed in the metropolis by a Chartist demonstration on Kennington Common, the object of which was to adopt a memorial to the Queen, praying for a remission of the sentence of death, passed the week before, upon three of the Birmingham rioters. A number of persons met as early as eleven o'clock, and marched in procession to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where they were met by several thousands of Chartists, from various districts about the metropolis. The whole body then marched back in order to Kennington Common, where they were addressed by Mr. Feargus O'Connor, Mr. W. Carpenter, Mr. Cardo, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Hare, Dr. Taylor, and Dr. Johnson. The memorial was adopted, with the addition of a prayer to Her Majesty for "the dismissal from her counsels of those men who have shown themselves hostile to the constitutional rights of the people, and whose conduct is furthermore calculated to produce all the dreadful consequences of a bloody revolution."

On the 14th of August some Chartists were tried at Chester for conspiracy—namely, George Thompson, Timothy Higgins, James Mitchel, and Charles Davies. The evidence went to show that they had in their possession a considerable quantity of fire-arms, with intent to aid the violent designs of the Chartists. Thompson, a Birmingham gunsmith, had upon his premises several orders for arms, with the following document :—"We hereby agree to become sureties for the payment of all arms sent to Timothy Higgins, at the Bush Inn. Signed, Charles Duke, Peter M'Dowell." The following placard was read, as being found in possession of the prisoner Higgins :—

"Dear Brothers,—Now are the times to try men's souls. Are your arms ready? Have you plenty of powder and shot? Have you screwed up your courage to the sticking point? Do you intend to be free men or slaves? Are you inclined to hope for a fair day's

wage for a fair day's work? Ask yourselves these questions, and remember that your safety depends upon the strength of your own right arm. How long are you going to allow your mothers, your wives, your children, and your sweethearts to be for ever toiling for other people's benefit? Nothing can convince tyrants of their folly but gunpowder and steel; so put your trust in God, my boys, and keep your powder dry. Be patient a day or two, but be ready at a moment's warning. No man knows what to-morrow may bring forth. Be ready, then, to nourish the tree of liberty with the blood of tyrants. You can get nothing by cowardice. France is in arms; Poland groans beneath the bloody Russian yoke; and Irishmen pant to enjoy their liberty. Up, then, because the whole world depends upon you for support. If you fail, the working man's sun is set for ever. The operatives of France have again taken possession of the city. Can you remain passive when all the world is in arms? No, brave boys! up with the cap of liberty! now or never is the time. When you strike, let it not be with stick or stone; but let the blood of all you suspect moisten the soil of your native land, that you may for ever destroy even the remembrance of poverty and shame."

Then came some doggerel verses—

"In tyrants' blood baptize your sons,
And every villain slaughter;
By pike and sword your freedom try to gain,
Or make one bloody Moscow of old England's plain."

The jury took five minutes only to consider their verdict of guilty against all the prisoners. They were each sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment, and to find bail at the expiration of that time, themselves in £500, and two sureties in £100 each, for five years.

The Rev. Joseph Rayner Stephens, of Hyde, county of Chester, was tried at the same assizes. The prosecution was conducted by the Attorney-General, and Mr. Stephens defended himself. He was charged with a misdemeanour in attending an unlawful assembly, and exciting those present to a disturbance of the public peace. Many who attended the meeting carried arms, and bore banners with the inscriptions—"Tyrants, believe and tremble;" "Liberty or death;" "Ashton demands universal suffrage or universal vengeance;" "For children and wife, we'll war to the knife." There was also a transparency with the word "Blood." At that meeting the prisoner told the people he had good news for them. "He had been to the barracks, seen the soldiers, and the soldiers would not act against the people." He asked if they had fire-arms, and were ready; and the answer was given by a round of shots. The meeting continued till midnight. The prisoner addressed the jury in a speech which lasted more than five hours, but he called no witnesses. The Attorney-General replied, and immediately after the conclusion of the judge's charge, the jury found a verdict of "guilty." The court sentenced Mr. Stephens to eighteen months' imprisonment in Knutsford gaol.

McDowell, another Chartist, was convicted at the same assizes, and was sentenced by Baron Gurney to

twelve months' imprisonment in Chester Castle; and his companion, named Bradley, was sentenced to eight months. McDowell, who was the principal Chartist leader in Lancashire, defended himself with great ability. Among other things, he was charged with uttering the following seditious language:—"They are a bloody set of Whigs for persecuting Stephens. I advise you, men, women, and children of Hyde, to arm, as the people have been doing in other parts of the country. I have been to different parts of the country to enlighten the people; I have been to Sheerness and Chatham, and have advised the people to arm, and take possession of the Tower, with its 200 stand of arms, if they will not grant the people's Charter. Fifty determined men could arm all London. There is plenty of guns in gunsmiths' shops, and they might get thousands of stands of arms by placing their foot against the door. The London Chartists would be ready at three days' notice to meet the people of that district." There was then a cry, "We are ready," and a pistol was fired. The prisoner further said, "The officers of the army and navy, five out of seven, are with you, and the soldiers are getting up petitions in favour of the Charter. Thirty stout-hearted farmers' sons with bill-hooks would do a great deal of execution in a good cause like ours. One stout man with a bill-hook would do as much execution as a scamping fellow in a red jacket, hired for tenpence a day."

At a meeting of the National Convention held on the 14th of September, it was moved by Mr. O'Brien, and seconded by Dr. Taylor, that the Convention be dissolved. On a division, the numbers were for the dissolution eleven; against it eleven. The chairman gave his casting vote in favour of the dissolution. The dissentients recorded their protests on the ground that it was incompetent for a fraction of the body to perform such an act; that the Convention was bound to sit till the Charter was carried; and that their not doing so was a desertion of duty at this eventful crisis, and cowardice in the cause of Chartism, if not crime, tending to create suspicion and distrust in the minds of the people, and to impede, if not destroy, the progress of reform.

On the 20th of the same month Mr. Feargus O'Connor was arrested at Manchester, on a judge's warrant, for a seditious conspiracy, seditious speeches, &c. He appeared at the borough court before the mayor and a full bench of magistrates. He entered into his own recognisance for £300, and found two sureties of £150 each to appear at the court in Liverpool. The principal leaders having been now made amenable to justice, and the Convention being dissolved, it was hoped, and, indeed, publicly declared by the Attorney-General, that Chartism was extinct, and would never again be revived. It soon appeared, however, that this was a delusion, and that a most formidable attempt at revolution by force of arms had been planned with great care and secrecy, and on a comprehensive scale, the principal leader being a justice of the peace. Among the new borough magistrates made by the Whigs after the passing of the Reform Bill was Mr. John Frost, a linendraper at Newport. At the beginning of the Chartist agitation in 1838, Mr.

Frost attended a meeting in that town, when he made a violent speech, for which he was reprimanded by the Home Secretary. But this warning was far from having the desired effect. During the autumn of 1839 he entered into a conspiracy with two other leaders—Jones, a watch-maker, of Pontypool, and Williams, of the Royal Oak Inn, in the parish of Aberystwith—to take possession of the town of Newport, which was to be the signal for a simultaneous rising of the Chartists in Birmingham and in all other parts of the kingdom. The town of Newport is the capital of a picturesque country, called the Hill District, which forms a sort of triangle. The whole region is intersected by well-watered glens, and maintains a mining population of 40,000, in regions which fifty years ago contained only the scattered dwellings of a few shepherds. It had been arranged that the men of the hills should march in three divisions on the town. Every member was sworn to obey his captain, without knowing, till the moment of rising, who that captain was. The non-arrival of the Welsh mail at Birmingham at the usual time was to be the concerted intimation that the insurrection had succeeded. But the weather was unfavourable, and the night was dark. The divisions under the command of Jones and Williams failed to arrive at the appointed time, and the party under the command of Frost himself was late. The intention was to surprise Newport at about midnight on Sunday, the 3rd of November; but owing to the wetness of the weather, it was not till ten o'clock on Monday morning that the insurgents entered the town in two divisions, one headed by Frost, and another by his son, a youth of fourteen or fifteen. They were armed with guns, pistols, pikes, swords, and heavy clubs. The mayor, Mr. Thomas Philips, jun., apprised of their approach, had taken prompt measures for the defence of the place. He placed special constables at the three principal inns, and he sat up all night in the Westgate Hotel, making arrangements and sending scouts into the country. Having thus ascertained that the Chartists were actually on the march for Newport, he made application for aid to Captain Stack, of the 45th Regiment. Thirty men were accordingly sent off, under the command of Lieutenant Gray, who took up their position in the Westgate Inn, which stands in the market-place, and was expected to be the principal point of attack. Two large rooms, one at each end of the building, with projecting windows, opened on the street, and communicated with each other by means of a corridor. The eastern apartment was occupied by the military. In the western were assembled the magistrates with the police, while a body of special constables surrounded the hotel. When the insurgents drew up in front of the building about 8,000 strong, Frost commanded the special constables to surrender. On their refusal the word was given to fire, and a volley was discharged against the bow window of the room where the military were located, and at the same moment the rioters, with their pikes and other instruments, drove in the door, and rushed into the passage. It was a critical moment, but the mayor and the magistrates were equal

to the emergency. The riot act having been read by the mayor amidst a shower of bullets, the soldiers charged their muskets, the shutters were opened, and the fighting began. A shower of slugs immediately poured in from the street, which wounded Mr. Philips and several other persons. But the soldiers opened a raking discharge upon the crowd without, and after a few rounds, by which a great many persons fell dead on the spot, the assailants broke and fled in all directions. Frost was not visible after the first discharge, but he was afterwards seen crossing Tredegar Park. In addition to the gunshot wound, the mayor received a severe cut in the right side, which for some time quite disabled him. A sergeant and a private, and two shopkeepers of Newport, Messrs. Williams and Morgan, were seriously wounded, and several other special constables slightly. These were the whole of the casualties on the side of law and order.

The mayor ordered Frost's house to be searched for papers, and then proceeded to the house of Partridge, his printer, where he found Frost himself quietly taking his supper of bread and cheese, apparently unconscious of danger, though a reward of £100 had been offered for his apprehension. They were both made prisoners, with many others. The number of the killed was upwards of twenty, but the wounded were much more numerous. The bodies of the dead were found lying about the streets and in the fields. Their dress and appearance indicated that they were in full employment, which was the case at that time with the Welsh miners generally.

The examination of the prisoners commenced the day after the battle, and continued to the end of the month. The people among the hills remained for some time in a very disturbed state, and there was great apprehension felt that other risings would follow. But the defeat of the insurgents by so small a body of soldiers, and the arrest of their chiefs, had the effect of gradually extinguishing the hopes of the Chartists. On the 9th of November Lord Normanby addressed a letter to Mr. Philips, mayor of Newport, expressing the Queen's high approval of the conduct of the magistrates; and on the 13th of November, he addressed another letter, offering him, in Her Majesty's name, the honour of knighthood, which on his recovery was conferred upon him at Windsor Castle.

Frost, Williams, and Jones were tried by a special commission at Monmouth, and found guilty of high treason. Sentence of death was pronounced upon them on the 16th of January, 1840. The event naturally excited great interest, and the court was crowded as soon as the doors were opened. At nine o'clock the judges took their seats, and the prisoners were ordered to be placed at the bar. Frost's countenance expressed the same calmness that he had exhibited all through the trial. Williams appeared low and desponding, and Jones had lost that air of levity and carelessness by which he had previously been distinguished. The three judges having put on their black caps, the Chief Justice, Sir Nicholas Tyndall, pronounced sentence upon the prisoners. He stated that they had been found guilty of a crime which, beyond all

others, is the most pernicious in example, and the most injurious in its consequences to the peace and happiness of human society—that they who, by armed numbers, or violence, or terror, endeavour to put down established institutions, and to introduce in their stead a new order of things, open wide the flood-gates of rapine and bloodshed, destroy all security of property and life, and do their utmost to involve a whole nation in anarchy and ruin. “What would have been the fate of the peaceable and unoffending inhabitants,” he said, “if success had attended your rebellious designs, it is useless to conjecture; the invasion of a foreign foe would in all probability have been less destructive to human property and life.” Sentence of death was then pronounced upon the three prisoners, “that they should be thence drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution, and that each of them be there hanged by the neck until he was dead, and afterwards the head of each should be severed from his body, and the body of each, divided into four quarters, should be disposed of as Her Majesty thought fit.” Frost raised his eyes during the latter part of the sentence, but the other prisoners did not show any signs of emotion. Addresses to the Queen for mercy to the three convicts were sent from twelve congregations in Birmingham, and a petition to Parliament to the same effect from that town received 21,000 signatures in three days. The petition was granted, and on the 1st of February, the sentence was commuted to transportation for life. A free pardon was granted to them on the 3rd of May, 1856, and they returned to England in the September following.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Ireland—Assassination of Lord Norbury—Speech of Lord Oxmantown on the State of the Country—“Property has its Duties as well as its Rights”—Mr. O’Connell—The Precursor Association—Banquets in Dublin and Drogheda—Attack on the Irish Government by Mr. Shaw, Recorder of Dublin—Lord Morpeth’s Defence of the Government—O’Connell’s Assault on the Irish Tories—Lord Roden’s Motion for a Select Committee on the State of Ireland—Lord Normanby’s Defence of his Government—Diminution of Crime—Liberation of Prisoners—Condemnation of the Government by the Lords—O’Connell’s prodigious Activity as an Agitator, in order to keep out the Tories—Resolution of Lord John Russell on the Policy of the Irish Government—Sir R. Peel’s Amendment—Monster Debate on Ireland—Lord J. Russell and Sir R. Peel on the Causes of Irish Crime—Speech of Lord Morpeth—Increase in the Value of Land in Ireland and of other Property—Defiance of the Opposition—Remarkable Speech of Mr. Shell—Majority in favour of Government—Suspension of the Constitution of Jamaica—Virtual Defeat of the Cabinet—Resignation of Lord Melbourne—Sir R. Peel fails in his Attempt to form an Administration—The Ladies of the Bed-chamber—Sir R. Peel’s Explanation—Lord John Russell’s Reply—Remarks on the same Subject by Lord Melbourne, the Duke of Wellington, and Macaulay.

THE first day of 1839 was marked in Ireland by an atrocious crime which was involved in a mystery that has never yet been cleared up. The Earl of Norbury, an amiable nobleman, regarded as one of the most exemplary of his class, both as a man and a landlord, was shot by an assassin in the open day near his own house at Kilbeggan, and in presence of his steward. He was walking in a shrubbery late in the afternoon, giving directions about the cutting down of some trees, when he fell by the hand of an assassin. The account given by

the steward at the coroner’s inquest contains all the information that has ever been obtained by the public upon this subject. It was about a quarter to four, and clear daylight. The steward at the time had his back turned towards a hedge which skirted the plantation, in which they then were; and while looking up at the trees that were to be cut, he heard the report of a gun, and turning round saw smoke proceeding from a hedge, and then a man on the other side, stooping and running away. He followed him twenty yards, but was recalled by the cries of Lord Norbury, who was weak and faint, the shot having penetrated his body a little below the left breast. The Earl died about twelve o’clock on the night of the 3rd, after forty-three hours of extreme suffering. He had received six wounds from a blunderbuss, loaded with swan shot. The only other gentleman stopping at Kilbeggan at the time was Mr. Stewart, son-in-law of the deceased. Lord Norbury had never acted as a magistrate, he took no part in politics, and he bore an excellent character among the Roman Catholic population for his good and charitable disposition.

This event deserves special mention, because it was, during the year, the subject of frequent reference in Parliament. There was a meeting of magistrates at Tullamore, at which Lord Oxmantown presided, and made some important remarks on the state of the country. In his opinion the murder originated in a far-spread conspiracy, for wresting property out of the hands of the proprietors, by the abolition of rent, with the determination of effecting by assassination what they were unable to extort by open rebellion. “It was,” he observed, “but an additional demonstration of the deep and increasing demoralisation of a country where the assassin found in every peasant his protector—in every cottage a place of concealment, and was seldom brought to justice, but by the most strenuous exertions, the magistrates and police extorting by ingenious devices from unwilling witnesses some trifling fact which at length led to the detection of the parties.” Lord Oxmantown ascribed this demoralisation to the following causes:—“The years that immediately followed the Act of Emancipation gave birth to a class of men, who were unable to rest content with simple equality; without any pretensions to station or personal merit, they aspired to a predominance which could be achieved only by the alienation of the Roman Catholic tenants from the landlords, who had generally a great hold over them by their feelings as well as by their interests. It was accordingly their policy to form in every village a little club of the lowest sort of agitators. These persons made it their special business to calumniate the landlord, and to raise a prejudice against him, speaking contemptuously of gratitude, when that feeling presented an obstacle to their purposes, and palliating acts of extreme personal violence, in cases where it was necessary to overawe men by fear. The parochial clubs were in connection with county societies, which in their turn maintained communication with a junto of agitators in the metropolis. The known character of the chief movers in these pro-

ceedings prevented their acquiring any considerable influence among the better sort of people till 1835. At that time the peasantry were led to believe that a compact had been entered into by the Ministry with the leading agitators in Dublin, which bound the Government, in exchange for the political assistance of those individuals, to the adoption of their principles. From this moment the little knots of idle and vicious persons in each parish succeeded in spreading their demoralising influence among the peasantry, with an authority almost equal to that of Government emissaries, and had been the main instruments in bringing the people into their present condition."

The Earl of Charleville adopted the same view of the subject, and took occasion to animadvert very strongly upon an expression in a letter, in answer to a memorial lately presented by the magistrates of Tipperary, in which Mr. Drummond, the Under Secretary, uttered the celebrated maxim, that "property had its duties as well as its rights." This, under the circumstances of the country, was felt to be little less than a deliberate and unfeeling insult. He did not hesitate to say that the employment of those terms had given a fresh impulse to feelings which had found their legitimate issue in the late assassination. In the course of the meeting, resolutions were proposed and carried to the following effect:—"That the answer to the Tipperary magistrates by Mr. Under Secretary Drummond has had the effect of increasing the animosities entertained against the owners of the soil, and has emboldened the disturbers of the public peace. That there being little hope for a successful appeal to the Irish executive, they felt it their duty to apply to the people of England, the legislature, and the throne for protection."

These resolutions may be taken as expressing the feelings of the landed gentry as a body against the Melbourne administration and the agitators. But the latter were not idle. O'Connell had then his "Precursor Association" in full operation. It received its name from the idea that it was to be the precursor of the repeal of the Union. On the 22nd of January a public dinner was given in honour of the "Liberator" in a building then called the Circus, in Dublin, for which one thousand tickets were issued. Two days later, a similar banquet was given to him in Drogheda, and there he made a significant allusion to the murder of Lord Norbury, insinuating that he had met his death at the hands of one who was bound to him by the nearest of natural ties, and had the strongest interest in his removal. Mr. O'Connell volunteered the assertion, that the assassin of Lord Norbury had left on the soil where he had posted himself, "not the impress of a rustic brogue, but the impress of a well-made Dublin boot."

These occurrences in Ireland led to hostile demonstrations against the Government in Parliament. On the 7th of March Mr. Shaw commenced the campaign by moving for returns of the number of committals, convictions, inquests, rewards, and advertisements for the discovery of offenders in Ireland from 1835 to 1839, in order to enable the House to form a judgment with regard to the

actual amount and increase of crime in that country. The Opposition were the more strongly provoked to adopt this course from the fact that there was no allusion to the condition of Ireland in the speech from the throne. When the returns were obtained, they were represented as unsatisfactory and illusory, for reasons which it is not now necessary to investigate. Mr. Shaw, in allusion to the murder of Lord Norbury, a nobleman avowedly so useful and so beneficent, said that if anything were wanting to confirm the evidence of a conspiracy against property and the exercise of judgment, it would be found in that unprovoked and atrocious crime. Mr. Garry, the agent of the deceased lord, had received from a poor man a copy of the speech made by Emmet before Lord Norbury, the father of the murdered nobleman. This was printed in Paris in 1835, and had been in circulation previous to the murder. Owing to constant menaces, Mr. Garry himself had been compelled to leave the country. Mr. Shaw contended that all this went to substantiate the existence of a general confederacy. He was forced to believe with most of the land agents of Ireland that the formidable confederations that had been in existence during the last century, under the various names of Whitefeet, Rockites, Terryalts, still continued to exist, and were, in fact, never in more active operation than at the present moment. Mr. Shaw adduced, as proofs of this, some documents that had been found belonging to a Ribbon Society. "The Ministers," he said, "had encouraged agitation, and were now reaping the inevitable fruits. They have shaken, by the wholesale exercise of mercy, the foundations of justice; they have slighted the judges; they have insulted the magistracy; and when the resident gentry were struggling against the most trying circumstances for the preservation of their lives and property, they made use of that most infelicitous moment to insinuate that their duties as landlords were neglected; they have selected from the ranks of the 'Precursor Society' the legal adviser of the Crown, and have made lord-lieutenant a nobleman who had avowed his interest in the war which was going on against the Church in Ireland. It is with sorrow," continued Mr. Shaw, the Recorder of Dublin, "that I have borne testimony against my own country. I must suffer with her adversity, and can only prosper when she is prosperous. In common with all loyal subjects in Ireland, I implore you to consider the sufferings, the shame, and the sorrow of a sister people, before that unhappy land ceases to be inhabitable, and be blotted out from among the civilised nations of the earth."

Lord Morpeth, afterwards Earl of Carlisle, then Chief Secretary of Ireland, defended the policy of Lord Normanby. He reviewed the history of agrarian outrages in Ireland, and read a statement made by Sir Robert Peel in 1829, which showed that from the period of the Union—when the retirement of Mr. Pitt from office brought into greater prominence the differences of public men in regard to the Catholic question—Ireland had scarcely been governed for one single year according to



CHARTIST RIOTS AT NEWPORT.

the ordinary course of law. The introduction of the Coercion Bill, and the forcible exposition of Lord Stanley on the state of the country, in justification of that measure, were sufficient to characterise the remaining interval before the accession of Lord Normanby. It had been alleged that the clergy were special objects of intimidation under the present Government. "But," asked Lord Morpeth, "how stood the fact? In one year—from April, 1829, to May, 1830—no less than twelve outrages on clergymen had taken place, while only two such excesses were on record during the four years of the present administration." Lord Morpeth then gave a statistical statement, which he premised by the suggestive remark that it was no wholesome state of things, when any party had been brought insensibly to conceive that they had an interest in magnifying the amount of crimes at a particular period, since there was a danger that such persons would never display the same energy in the counteraction of what they had long contended to be the actual condition of things. He showed from the constabulary returns that, beginning at 1837, there had been a decrease of 1,117 outrages in eighteen months, while the committals for forcible possession had fallen in the same period from 1,600 to 930. Not only had the committals increased in proportion to the number of offences, but the amount of convictions had been augmented in comparison with that of committals. The progressive increase of committals upon minor charges, which had taken place of late years, was attributed by the best authorities to the establishment of petty sessions, the prevention of the compromise of crime, and the more effectual pursuit of inconsiderable offenders. Lord Morpeth then, with the greatest ease, swept away the arguments of those who would make the Government responsible for the murder of Lord Norbury, and who objected so strongly to the maxim of Mr. Drummond, giving, at the same time, one of the most admirable and complete expositions of the philosophy of agrarian crime in Ireland to be found in our language. "Mr. Secretary Drummond," he said, "has given great offence by asserting, on a late occasion, that property has its duties as well as its rights." It was said that the effect of this expression was to raise a hope of impunity for crime. But unfortunately, at the very moment of utterance the Government was in possession of a clue for the discovery of the murderers in question, who had since been tried and executed. But could it otherwise be supposed that those reckless persons, who were ready, as had been proved, on the slightest prompting of any man with whom they might be connected, either by former engagement, or mere identity of situation, to undertake the execution of the most deadly crime—brood over their purposes for weeks and months with unceasing vigilance, and, at last, accomplish, with calculated accuracy, a deliberate murder—could such a brotherhood, Lord Morpeth asked, be influenced by a common truism from the desk of a Government officer? "And was it, after all," he continued, "so very reprehensible in Mr. Drummond, in reply to a long memorial on the causes of crime from the magistrates of Tippe-

rary, to indicate to those who are alone capable of effectual admonition, the quarter from which all danger mainly emanated, with a caution against increasing, by any fresh irritation, the existing evil?" Lord Morpeth proceeded to read a return of the gross amount of *ejectments* in certain counties, from the year 1833 to 1838, inclusive. In Tipperary, during these six years, there had been 882; in Carlow, 191; in Longford, 172, besides 330 from the Quarter Sessions Court; in Queen's County, 213; in King's County, 152; in Sligo, 180; in Westmeath, 200. There were, upon an average, four families under each ejectment, and five individuals in a family. About 20 persons, therefore, were turned out in each case of ejectment. These returns might not prove much. But he possessed many documents referring to individual cases—memorials stating facts which were calculated to create no very pleasant feelings in the House, or on the public. He would not read them; but be content with observing that Government would fail in its duty were it to confine the voice of warning to one side only. "Many of these excesses complained of," continued Lord Morpeth, "were stimulated by a feeling, whether just or not, of personal oppression, and there could be no doubt that the poorer classes were influenced in favour of the transgressors by the apprehension of being themselves placed in a similar position. Local circumstances were the immediate causes of these disorders, but their remote origin lay in the radically vicious structure of society, which had arisen out of events in Irish history. No sudden change of men or measures could reach this deep-seated malady. In the language of Mr. Lewis, the Whiteboy disposition sprang from the peculiar state of the peasantry, which makes the possession of land a necessary of life. So long as the same causes remained in operation, there was no hope of suppressing these disturbances by the fear of punishment. All species of legal severity compatible with our form of government and state of civilisation has been tried, and has failed. *Penarum exhaustum satis est.* Upon men who have nothing to hope in their actual state, and little to fear from the consequences of crime, it is vain to attempt to work with the ordinary engines of government. 'When the heart is past hope,' said the proverb, 'the face is past shame.'

"Honourable gentlemen," said the noble lord in continuation, "might question the policy of Ministers—they might libel their motives—it mattered not; but this he would take leave to say, that they would never withdraw the opinion deliberately given, that property had its duties no less than its rights, or cease to urge, with even more deliberate warning, upon friends or opponents—all without exception—that there were proceedings which, while Ireland continued what it long has been, and long, he feared, must be, would generate resistance. 'The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear.' . . . Without risking a conflict upon the new Poor Law Bill, or any analogous measure, he could not conclude without the declaration of his own deep conviction, that it was by operating, in the first instance, upon the outward circumstances of the people that they

could afterwards cope with their moral condition, by creating new links between the employer and employed—by planting new hopes and new habits in their bosoms—deepening the channels of industry, and developing all natural resources. By these means alone could they effectually obtain the great ends of civil government and social order.”

This Irish debate was distinguished by a speech from the chief agitator of Ireland, which presented the greatest possible contrast to the speech of the Chief Secretary. It created a tumultuous scene, and brought into conflict on the floor of the House the fierce passions of the two conflicting Irish parties. Speeches, said Mr. O'Connell, were made there by Irish gentlemen, who came for the purpose of vilifying their native land, and endeavouring to prove that it was the worst and most criminal country on the face of the earth. “Yes,” he exclaimed, “you come here to calumniate the country that gave you birth. It is said there are some soils which produce enormous and crawling creatures—things odious and disgusting. (Loud and continuous cheering from the Opposition.) Yes, you who cheer—there you are. Can you deny it? Are you not calumniators? Oh, you hiss, but you cannot sting. I rejoice in my native land; I rejoice that I was born in it; I rejoice that I belong to it. Your calumnies cannot diminish my regard for it; your malevolence cannot blacken it in my esteem; and although your vices and crimes have driven its people to outrage and murder—(Loud cries of ‘Order.’) Yes, I say your vices and crimes. (Cries of ‘Chair.’ The Speaker interfered.) Well, then, the crimes of men like you have produced these results.”

The debate was adjourned till the following Monday, when it was resumed by Mr. Lefroy, who was followed by Mr. French, after which the House was counted out, and the question dropped; but it was taken up in the Lords on the 21st of March, when Lord Roden moved for a select committee of inquiry on the state of Ireland since 1835, with respect to the commission of crime. His speech was a repetition of the usual charges, and the debate is chiefly worthy of notice on account of the elaborate defence by Lord Normanby of his Irish administration. “I am fully aware,” said the noble marquis, “of the awful responsibility that would lie upon my head, if these charges rested upon evidence at all commensurate with the vehemence of language and earnestness of manner with which they have been brought forward; but they rest upon no such foundation. I am ready, with natural indignation, to prove now, on the floor of this House, that I have grappled with crime wherever I have found it, firmly and unremittingly, and have yielded to none of my predecessors in the successful vindication of the laws.” Among the mass of proofs adduced by Lord Normanby, he quoted a vast number of judges’ charges, delivered from time to time between 1816 and 1835, which presented only one continuously gloomy picture of the prevailing practice of violence and atrocious outrage. Passing from this melancholy record, he proceeded to refer to numerous addresses of judges delivered on similar occasions since 1835. All of these

contained one common topic of congratulation, viz., the comparative lightness of the calendar—a circumstance, the noble marquis argued, which went far to establish his position, however it might fail to prove the extinction of exceptional cases of heinous crime. With regard to the wholesale liberation of prisoners, Lord Normanby distinctly denied that he had set free any persons detained for serious offences, without due inquiry; or that any persons were liberated merely because he happened to pass through the town, who would not have met with the same indulgence upon facts stated in memorials. “No, this measure,” he insisted, “had been adopted upon the conviction that, in the peculiar case of Ireland, after severity had been so often tried, mercy was well worth the experiment. It was one which was not lightly to be repeated; but while he had received satisfactory evidence of the success of the measure, it was in his power to produce the testimony of judges with whom he had no political relations, to the pains taken in the examination of each case, and the deference shown to their reports.”

Having given proofs of this allegation by a reference to the various classes of cases, Lord Normanby proceeded to say that it might be urged that the lavish use of the prerogative had promoted the presentation of memorials. But how stood the case? In 1824 it was stated incidentally to another question, that no less than 2,600 memorials had been brought before Lord Wellesley in the preceding year, and capital sentence set aside in 400 cases; whereas only 1,600 memorials had been sent to him in fifteen months, and no more than nine capital sentences remitted, all upon the recommendation of the judges. Turning to another charge, the exclusive promotion of Roman Catholic functionaries, the noble lord read a list from which it appeared that in various legal and constabulary appointments the preponderance of Protestant appointments was in the following proportions:—8 to 6, 69 to 37, 27 to 8, 40 to 37. Lord Normanby took just credit for two measures adopted during his administration—the establishment of local prosecuting solicitors, which facilitated the punishment of crime; and the remodelling of the constabulary upon its present efficient system, under a central authority in Dublin. Having defended himself on other points, Lord Normanby concluded by saying that no decision of their lordships could take away the consolation which he should find in the approval of his own conscience, and the gratitude of the Irish people.

Lord Melbourne defended the Government. He was followed by Lord Brougham, who thought this was a case for inquiry, and that too free a use had been made of the prerogative. Lord Plunket replied to him, and regarded the speech as a fresh proof of the noble and learned lord’s political versatility. The motion for a select committee was carried by a majority of five. In consequence of this result, Lord John Russell announced his intention, next day, of taking the opinion of the House of Commons on the recent government of Ireland, in the first week after the Easter recess.

O’Connell was exasperated, by the vote of the Lords, to extraordinary energy. “It is not possible for us,”

says the editor of the "Annual Register," "to give any adequate picture of the almost supernatural activity of the great agitator. Day after day he was in the Corn Exchange. On Sunday, after mass, at each of the parochial meetings, we meet with his encouraging presence; and the columns of the newspapers were filled in the intervals with the exertions of his indefatigable pen." On the 6th of March he appeared at a meeting of the "Precursor Society" in Dublin, exclaiming, "What am I here for? To call upon all Ireland to rally round the Ministry—to call upon my two millions of Precursors—to call on the inhabitants of all the counties, towns, boroughs, cities, and villages in Ireland to meet at once and second me in my undertaking. Let Sunday week be the day, and on that day let every parish in Ireland meet and adopt petitions on the subject. We want not those who look for places to join us—no packed juries, no dishonest judges. We want only equality. Refuse us this, and then, in the day of your weakness, dare to go to war with the most insignificant of the powers of Europe." The great day of this agitating campaign was the 11th of April, when an immense meeting was held in the Theatre Royal, Dublin, which might be regarded as an aggregate meeting of the Liberal party, including all sections. Most of the Whig nobility and gentry either attended or sent apologetic notes expressing their approval of the object, which was to sustain the Ministry against the Tories. The chair was occupied by the Duke of Leinster, and the proceedings, which were of a very animated character, were wound up by Mr. O'Connell, who concluded his impassioned appeal in the following terms:—"The shout which that day emanated from that theatre would be heard at St. Stephen's, and would cheer the heart of the Queen at St. James's. Let Her Majesty be menaced by the ferocious despots of the northern deserts—let the more steady tyrants of Europe combine—let France, a country in which the king and the people seem affected with a periodical insanity, break her fetters again; but let Ireland be governed as she had been by Normanby and as she would be by Fortescue, and if any hostile foot dared to tread on the Queen's dominions, the foe to the throne should either surrender or submit to be dashed into the sea."

As soon as the House assembled after Easter, on the 8th of April, Lord John Russell, in pursuance of his announcement, gave notice that he would, on the 15th, propose the following resolution:—"That it is the opinion of this House that it is expedient to persevere in those principles which have guided the Executive Government of late years, and which have tended to the effectual administration of the laws, and the general improvement of that part of the United Kingdom."

On the following day Sir Robert Peel gave notice that he would move an amendment to that resolution. After a long preamble, consisting of a recital of admitted facts, the amendment stated in substance, that the appointment of a committee of inquiry by the House of Lords did not justify Ministers in calling upon the House of Commons, without previous inquiry, or the production

of information, to make a declaration of opinion with respect to one branch of the public policy of the Executive Government, still less a declaration of opinion which was neither explicit as to the principles it professed to approve, nor definite as to the period to which it referred; and that it was not fitting that the House of Commons should adopt a proceeding that had the appearance of calling in question the undoubted right of the House of Lords to inquire into the state of Ireland, more especially when the exercise of that right did not interfere with any previous proceeding or resolution of the Commons, nor with the progress of any legislative measure assented to by it, or then under its consideration.

When the 15th arrived, the two great parties commenced the contest on their old battle-field. Lord John Russell moved his resolution of confidence in the Irish administration, which he supported in a long and able speech, in which he said:—"After all, it is idle to expect any immediate removal of misery, the seeds of which were sown in days long passed away. As a great statesman has said, 'Men do not live on blotted paper; the friendly or the hostile mind is far more important to mankind, for good or evil, than the black letter of any statute.' Deeply impressed with the truth of these principles, I now invoke your approval of a course or policy conciliatory to the Irish people; and although, in adherence to the condemnatory judgment of the House of Lords, you should reject this resolution, be yet assured that the Ministry who would succeed the present one would find no favour in the eyes of Ireland; ranking suspicion would still abide that impartial benefits and indifferent justice were not to be expected at their hands. Should the amendment of the right hon. baronet attain a majority in this House," concluded the noble lord, "that event, however dangerous to Ireland, and disadvantageous to the whole empire, will leave us no reason to regret. And come the dissolution of this Ministry when it will, there will ever be consolation in the reflection that we have not shrunk from incurring obloquy, or impairing our popularity, with a view of strengthening the whole United Kingdom, by knitting together the hearts of all Her Majesty's subjects, and founding a government in Ireland which should secure the good will and the affections of the people."

The noble lord was immediately followed by Sir Robert Peel, who assailed the policy of the Government in a speech of great power, abounding in irony and sarcasm. In conclusion, he said, "Nothing could give me greater pain than to be obliged to condemn Lord Normanby. From his very early youth I have known and esteemed him, and, in common with all others who shared his acquaintance, I rejoiced in the development of those brilliant natural parts with which he is unquestionably endowed. I believe, like Lord Glenelg, the noble lord has displayed great official aptitude, and has conscientiously discharged his duty; and though he has not conciliated his political enemies in his public career, he has not alienated a single public or private

friend. But I cannot vote for this resolution. I cannot affirm that Lord Normanby has acted upon the principles I have just laid down. He has not sufficiently set his face against agitation; and in the exercise of mercy, he has been, not indeed corrupt, but far too reckless and indiscriminate. Nevertheless, I shall move no vote of censure." The right hon. baronet ended by warning the House against entering into a collision with the Lords in a position of affairs so little promising as the present, both at home and abroad.

Mr. Spring Rice was the next speaker. When he concluded, the debate was adjourned, and was resumed the following day by Mr. Emerson Tennent, who was followed by Colonel Percival, Mr. Lascelles, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Colonel Conolly, and Mr. Lucas on the side of the Opposition. The Government was defended by Mr. Smith O'Brien, Mr. Bellew, the O'Connor Don, Sir William Somerville, and Mr. Henry Grattan. The House on this occasion was thin and inattentive, and the debate was again adjourned on the motion of Mr. Barron, who resumed it next day. Mr. Grote spoke in favour of the resolution, but restricted his approbation altogether to the Irish policy of Government. Sir E. Lytton Bulwer supported the Government; and with regard to the general question, he said:—"If this were a general vote of confidence, he would ask his friend Mr. Grote to point out, in the history of the country, any administration more closely identified with great and imperishable ameliorations; and he called on him, as a practical man, to indicate the elements of any Government which, on the whole, would keep better faith with the gradual development of popular civilisation."

The House again adjourned, on the motion of Mr. Morgan O'Connell, who opened the discussion on the following Thursday. It was carried on by Mr. J. Young, Sir David Roche, Sir Charles Douglas, Mr. William Roche, Mr. Plumtree, Mr. Redington, Sir F. Trench, Mr. Hume, Mr. Lefroy, and Lord Morpeth. The latter said that he found it impossible to remain silent, although he had so recently gone into a vast number of statistical details. He would now confine himself, for the most part, to general principles and broad results. "The resolutions of Sir Robert Peel," he said, "had been framed in the true party spirit of carping and invidious recrimination. If," said the noble viscount, "the House of Lords and the gentlemen opposite really and actually believe that any portion of the big words of charge with which they had filled their mouths were capable of being substantiated, the impropriety of the late course of proceeding would appear in colours infinitely more glaring, for enough has been stated, twenty times over, to warrant I do not know how many impeachments." He continued to repel the various attacks upon the Government with great spirit and effect. With regard to the pardon of criminals, he said: "It seemed, indeed, that the exercise of the prerogative of mercy was the only subject upon which no statute of limitations was to run, the only crime which was inextinguishable and not to be forgiven." The most instructive

portion of the noble Chief Secretary's speech was the statistics which he gave, collected from leading land-agents, as to the recent increase of the value of land in Ireland. In Galway it had risen from twenty years to twenty-five years' purchase. In Cork, Limerick, and Tipperary, it had risen from eighteen to twenty-two or twenty-three years' purchase. In Dublin, Carlow, Wicklow, Wexford, Tyrone, Derry, Longford, Monaghan, Cavan, Down, Antrim, Armagh, Fermanagh, and Louth, the price of land had increased by from three to four years' purchase within the last fifteen years. It was also shown that during Lord Normanby's administration there had been a large increase in the value of Irish stocks of various kinds, and the numbers of depositors in the various banks. The Chief Secretary concluded in a strain of great confidence, and even defiance, not unmingled with scorn of his adversaries. "And now," he said, "whatever be the import of this demonstration of the Lords, whether it be a mere exhibition of impotent hostility, or, according to what I must believe to be the more accurate view of the case, amount to no less than an attempt to supersede us in the due conduct and control of the executive government of Ireland, we are at all events determined to have this point cleared up; we will not accept your commentaries, nor your gloss, nor your palliations. We will leave no room for ambiguity. We have had enough of partial attacks and isolated charges, of innuendoes and abuse, of motions for papers here and for committees there. We now come for a direct and unequivocal opinion at your hands; we will take no low ground; we will exist no longer on sufferance. We tell you that we will not put up with passive acquiescence or endurance. We will not be even contented with acquittal. My noble friend asks you this night for a direct, downright vote of approbation. In the name of the Irish Government, and of the whole Government, as implicated in its Irish policy, I assert fearlessly that we have deserved well of our country. This is a conviction which no taunts of yours can lessen the force of; and upon this issue I call you, the representatives of the empire, to come this night to the vote."

They did not come to the vote, however, that night. After a speech from Sir James Graham, who described the resolution of Lord John Russell as a sort of cordial given to a dying man, Mr. Duncombe moved the adjournment of the debate, and next evening brought forward an amendment, of which he had given notice, condemnatory of the finality principles of the Government with regard to parliamentary reform. The other speakers this night were Sir George Sinclair, Mr. Ingham, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Leader, and Mr. Sheil. Mr. Leader was particularly severe on the Government. "In what position is the Government?" he asked. "Why, the right hon. member for Tamworth governs England, the hon. and learned member for Dublin governs Ireland—the Whigs govern nothing but Downing Street. Sir Robert Peel is content with power without place or patronage, and the Whigs are contented with place and patronage without power. Let

any honourable man say which is the more honourable position."

Mr. Sheil, roused by the attacks upon his country, delivered one of his most powerful orations, composed of argument, fired by passion. The parallel between Ireland and Scotland, which constituted the peroration of his speech, deserves a place in history. "You would inquire," he said, "into the state of Ireland. Spare yourselves that superfluous labour—let your wonder cease. If any other country had been governed as you have governed us, would the results have been the same with those presented by that island for whose guilt as well as misfortunes it ought to occur to you to hold yourselves responsible. Take any country—take, if you please, that of the honourable member for Kilmarnock, who is making notes of what I am uttering—I will furnish him materials for a reply by inquiring of him, or of any Scottish gentleman who hears me, what would have been the fate of his own prosperous nation under the application of such policy as has been adopted towards that ill-fated country whose calamitous condition you are now lamenting. I would ask, if Scotland had been portioned out by the sword of military rapine among merciless adventurers—if, after the work of robbery was done, a code for the debasement of the Presbyterian population had been enacted—if the Presbyterians of Scotland had not only been despoiled of their property, but deprived of all power to acquire any—if they had been shut out of every honourable employment—if they had been spoliated of every political franchise, deprived of education, and brought down to a state of worse than feudal vassalage—and if, moreover, all these legislative atrocities had been perpetrated under the pretence of maintaining an Episcopal Establishment among a degraded Calvinistic people, have you any doubt—can even the member for Kilmarnock disbelieve—that Scotland would now present to Tory orators a field no less desolate for their mournful expatiation? Inquire, forsooth, into the state of Ireland since 1835! No, sir! But from the day on which to rapacity, to cruelty, to degradation, to oppression, by which the wise are maddened, our wretched island was surrendered—from that day to this hour let your inquiry be extended, and you may then learn that it is not at the door of Lord Normanby that Irish atrocities ought to be laid, but that they should be deposited at your fathers' graves—that the long inheritance of their guilt should descend upon you. And you think," cried the impassioned speaker, "to plant your feet upon our neck! Ah, be not too sure of that. We are no more what once we were—no nation, but a mere degraded populace. An unexampled change has fallen upon those mighty numbers, who, in progressive recovery from the effects of conquest, rapine, and oppression, have brought to bear upon a tyranny once deemed as irresistible as it was remorseless, the resources which nothing but a cause just beyond all others in the sight of Heaven, and the deepest consciousness of its rectitude could supply; and after a struggle of which the fame should be as imperishable

as the results are everlasting, by dint of energetic resolution and union indissoluble, have won from their antagonists their irrevocable freedom. These are they that, following up that noble event in no unworthy spirit, became the auxiliaries of their British fellow-citizens in another great achievement, and now, demanding equality as its only alternative, and putting in for that equality a justly imperative requisition, stand before you in one vast array, in which, with increasing numbers, increasing wealth, increasing intelligence, and consolidated power, are associated, and offer to your most solemn thoughts a series of reflections which should teach you to beware of collision with the Irish people."

The House was next addressed by Lord Stanley, who said this vote, if agreed to, would be of no value to the Government. It would have no operation at all on the Lords; and on the character of the Commons it would produce a bad one, by evincing a want of common prudence. The majority by whom it would be carried would be a very small one, less than the number of official members in the House, and it would be obtained only by the aid of unwilling friends and hard taskmasters. Mr. O'Connell followed Lord Stanley. Sir Francis Burdett attempted to speak, but was forced to sit down by the shouts of "Divide!" and "Question!" Lord John Russell then replied; and this great and memorable party debate ended in a triumph for the Government. On a division, the numbers were—for Sir Robert Peel's amendment, 296; against it, 318. Majority for the Ministry, 22.

The majority obtained on their Irish policy was about the number the Ministry could count on every vital question. It was not sufficiently large to exempt them from the imputation of holding office on sufferance; but if they were defeated, and succeeded by the Conservatives, the new Government could not hope to exist even on those terms; while Lord Melbourne had this advantage over Sir Robert Peel, that he was cordially supported by the Sovereign. Having escaped the Irish ordeal, it might be supposed that he was safe for a considerable time. But another question arose very soon after, on which the Cabinet sustained a virtual defeat. The Assembly in Jamaica had proved very refractory, and, in order to avoid the evil consequences of its perversity, Mr. Labouchere, on the 9th of April, brought forward a measure which was a virtual suspension of the constitution of the island for five years, vesting the government in the Governor and council, with three commissioners sent from England to assist in ameliorating the condition of the negroes, improving prison discipline, and establishing a system of poor laws. This measure was opposed by the whole strength of the Opposition. The question may be thus briefly stated. Previous to the Act of Emancipation, all punishments were inflicted on slaves by the domestics of the master, who was unwilling to lose the benefit of their services by sending them to prison. But when emancipation took place, that domestic power was terminated, and new prison regulations became necessary. The Colonial Legislature, however, persistently refused to adopt any,

and continued a course of systematic resistance to the will of the supreme Government, whose earnest and repeated recommendation had been utterly disregarded. It was contended, on the part of the Government, that if such a state of things were permitted to exist, the authority of Great Britain over its colonies would speedily be lost, and every little island that owed its political existence to the protection afforded by the Imperial

only five, which was regarded as tantamount to a defeat. On the 7th of May, therefore, Lord John Russell announced that Ministers had tendered their resignation, which was accepted by the Queen. He assigned as the reason for this step that the vote which had passed must weaken the authority of the Crown in the colonies, by giving support to the contumacy of Jamaica, and encouraging other colonies to follow its bad example.



MR. (AFTERWARDS SIR) ROWLAND HILL.

Government, would, without scruple, set its power at defiance.

Such being the state of the case, it might be supposed that no serious objection would be raised to the course adopted, in the interests of humanity and good government. But the Conservatives seized the opportunity for another party contest, and became quite vehement in their defence of the constitutional rights of the Jamaica planters. The debate was protracted for several nights, and counsel against the bill were heard at great length. Eventually the division took place, at five in the morning on the 6th of May, when the numbers were 294 to 289, giving the Government a majority of

This obvious consideration rendered more painfully apparent the weakness of the Government, arising from division among its supporters; for if anything could have induced the different sections of the Liberal party to suppress their differences, it would have been the necessity of interposing, in the manner proposed by the Government, to shield the unhappy negroes from the oppression of their exasperated taskmasters. To this state of things, as the real cause of the resignation, Lord Melbourne subsequently referred in the House of Peers. He said:—

“I should be exceedingly sorry if the accusation could be justly made against me of abandoning my post

in circumstances of difficulty or danger. When I was removed from office in 1835, I stated in reply to various addresses presented to me, that disunion among its supporters had broken up the administration, and that nothing but the most complete co-operation of all who in any degree thought with us could re-establish us in power, or maintain us there for any length of time, if re-established then. The union I advised had subsisted for a considerable length of time. But, at length, it has been broken up; and, considering that there was so much discord among my supporters, as to render it impossible for me to conduct the government efficiently and for the good of the country, I resigned my office. A great change has lately taken place in the constitution, which has excited considerable alarm in the minds of many who had great experience and knowledge in public affairs. One of the ablest and most experienced statesmen in Europe gave it as his opinion, with respect to these changes, 'They may do very well in times of peace, when there is no financial difficulty; but should we be involved in war, and feel the pressure of pecuniary difficulties, you will see how your new constitution will work.' Unless there be a due regard to the dictates of common sense in the country, that difficulty will be hard to meet. 'I will not attempt to decide which of the parties that divide the country is the better fitted to govern it, but I will quote a remark of William III., a man of a most prudent, simple, and sagacious mind. 'I do not know,' said he to Bishop Burnet, 'whether a monarchy or a republic be the better form of government—much may be said on either side; but I can tell you which is the worst—a monarchy which has not the power to put in effect the measures necessary for the good of the people.'"

After the lapse of a week, the House of Commons met again on the 13th of May, when Lord John Russell immediately rose and stated that since he had last addressed them, Sir Robert Peel had received authority from Her Majesty to form a new administration; and the right hon. baronet having failed, Her Majesty had been graciously pleased to permit that gentleman to state the circumstances which led to the failure. Sir Robert Peel then proceeded to detail all the facts necessary for the explanation of his position to the country. He had waited upon the Queen according to her desire, conveyed at the suggestion of the Duke of Wellington, who had been sent for by Her Majesty in the first instance. The Queen candidly avowed to him that she had parted with her late administration with great regret, as they had given her entire satisfaction. No one, he said, could have expressed feelings more natural and more becoming than Her Majesty did on this occasion, and at the same time principles more strictly constitutional with respect to the formation of a new Government. He stated his sense of the difficulties a new Government would have to encounter; but having been a party to the vote that led to those difficulties, nothing should prevent him from tendering to Her Majesty every assistance in his power. He accordingly, the next day, submitted the following list for her

approval in the formation of a new ministry:—The Duke of Wellington, Lord Lyndhurst, Earl of Aberdeen, Lord Ellenborough, Lord Stanley, Sir James Graham, Sir Henry Hardinge, and Mr. Goulburn. It was not until Thursday that any difficulty or misconception arose to lead to his relinquishing his attempt to form an administration. His difficulty related to the ladies of the household. With reference to all the subordinate appointments below the rank of a lady of the bed-chamber, he proposed no change; and he had hoped that all above that rank would have relieved him of any difficulty by at once relinquishing their offices. This not having been done, he had a verbal communication with Her Majesty on the subject, to which he received next day a written answer as follows:—

"Buckingham Palace,

"May 10th, 1839.

"The Queen having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir R. Peel to remove the ladies of her bed-chamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings."

To this communication Sir R. Peel returned the following reply:—"Sir R. Peel presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has had the honour of receiving your Majesty's note this morning. Sir R. Peel trusts that your Majesty will permit him to state to your Majesty his impression with respect to the circumstances which have led to the termination of his attempts to form an administration for the conduct of your Majesty's service. In the interview with which you honoured Sir R. Peel yesterday morning, after he had submitted to your Majesty the names of those he proposed to recommend to your Majesty for the principal executive appointments, he mentioned to your Majesty his earnest wish to be enabled, by your Majesty's sanction, so to constitute your Majesty's household that your Majesty's confidential servants might have the advantage of a public demonstration of your Majesty's full support and confidence, and at the same time, so far as possible, consistent with such demonstration, each individual appointment in the household should be entirely acceptable to your Majesty's personal feelings. On your Majesty's expressing a desire that the Earl of Liverpool should hold an office in the household, Sir R. Peel immediately requested your Majesty's permission at once to confer on Lord Liverpool the office of lord steward, or any other office which he might prefer. Sir R. Peel then observed that he should have every wish to apply a similar principle to the chief appointments which are filled by the ladies of your Majesty's household; upon which your Majesty was pleased to remark, that you must retain the whole of these appointments, and that it was your Majesty's pleasure that the whole should continue as at present, without any change. The Duke of Wellington, in the interview to which your Majesty subsequently admitted him, understood also that this was your Majesty's determination, and concurred with Sir R. Peel in opinion that, considering the great difficulties of the present

crisis, and the expediency of making every effort, in the first instance, to conduct the public business of the country with the aid of the present parliament, it was essential to the success of the mission with which your Majesty had honoured Sir R. Peel, that he should have such public proof of your Majesty's entire support and confidence, as would be afforded by the permission to make some changes in your Majesty's household, which your Majesty resolved on maintaining entirely without change. Having had the opportunity, through your Majesty's gracious consideration, of reflecting upon this point, he humbly submits to your Majesty that he is reluctantly compelled, by a sense of public duty, and of the interests of your Majesty's service, to adhere to the opinion which he ventured to express to your Majesty."

Having read those letters, Sir Robert Peel said that he made the demand from a sincere belief that it was impossible for him duly to administer public affairs without the fullest proof that he possessed the confidence of Her Majesty. "Could I," said Sir R. Peel, "look around me, and not see that it was my absolute duty to this country, and above all to Her Majesty, to require that every aid that could be given me should be given? What were the questions which would immediately press for my decision? The state of India, the state of Jamaica, the state of Canada would all require my immediate consideration, and with respect to some of them the proposal of legislative measures also. I considered the internal state of this country; I saw the insurrection in the provinces; I saw the letter of the noble lord opposite (Lord John Russell), inviting the respectable part of the population of this country to form themselves into armed societies for resisting outrage. Surely, sir, in addition to the ordinary difficulties besetting the course of a prime minister, these are circumstances which rendered that position at the present moment peculiarly onerous and arduous. . . . Sir, let me take that particular question on which my chief difficulty would arise. Who can conceal from himself that my difficulties were not Canada; that my difficulties were not Jamaica; that my difficulties were Ireland? (Ironical cheers.) I admit it fully, and thank you for the confirmation of my argument which those cheers afford. And what is the fact? I, undertaking to be a minister of the Crown, and wishing to carry on public affairs through the intervention of the present House of Commons, in order that I might exempt the country from the agitation, and possibly the peril of a dissolution—I, upon that very question of Ireland, should have begun in a minority of upwards of twenty members. A majority of twenty-two had decided in favour of the policy of the Irish Government. The chief members of the Irish Government, whose policy was so approved of, were the Marquis of Normanby, and the noble lord opposite, the member for Yorkshire (Lord Morpeth). By whom are the two chief offices in the household at this moment held? By the sister of Lord Morpeth and the wife of Lord Normanby. But the question is, would it be considered by the public that a minister had the

confidence of the Crown, when the relatives of his immediate political opponents held the highest offices about the person of the Sovereign? My impression decidedly was that I should not appear to the country to be in possession of that confidence; and that impression I could not overcome, and upon that impression I resolved to act. Who were my political opponents? Why, of the two I have named, one, the Marquis of Normanby, was publicly stated to be a candidate for the very same office which it was proposed I should fill, namely, the office of prime minister. The other noble lord (Morpeth) has been designated as the leader of this house; and I know not why his talents might not justify his appointment, in case of the retirement of his predecessor. Is it possible—I ask you to go back to other times; take Pitt or Fox, or any other minister of this proud country, and answer for yourselves this question—is it fitting that one man shall be minister, responsible for the most arduous charge that falls to the lot of man, and that the wife of the other—that other his most formidable political enemy—shall, with his express consent, hold office in immediate attendance on the Sovereign? Oh, no; I felt it was impossible. I could not consent to this. Yes," continued Sir Robert Peel, "feelings more powerful than reasoning on those precedents told me that it was not for my own honour or the public interest that I should consent to be minister of England. The public interest may suffer nothing by my abandonment of that high trust; the public interest may suffer nothing by my eternal exclusion from power. But the public interest would suffer, and I should be abandoning my duty to myself, my country, and above all, to the Queen my sovereign, if I were to consent to hold power on conditions which I felt to be, which I had the strongest conviction were incompatible with the authority and with the duty of a prime minister."

Lord John Russell, in reply, said that when Lord Melbourne took leave of Her Majesty after having tendered the resignations of the Cabinet, he advised her to send for the Duke of Wellington. With respect to the household, Lord Melbourne informed the Queen that, in latter times, when a change of administration took place, the great offices of the household, as well as all such as were held by members of either House of Parliament, were at the same time vacated. But with respect to the ladies of the bed-chamber, Lord Melbourne had given no advice to Her Majesty, as that was a point on which he did not suppose any question would arise. He remarked that there seemed to be a misunderstanding between the Queen and Sir Robert Peel on that point. The impression on Her Majesty's mind was, that the principle contended for went to the extent of subjecting the entire household to change at the recommendation of the minister. It was under this impression that Her Majesty declined to adopt a course which she believed to be contrary to usage and repugnant to her feelings. But he added that, in Her Majesty's view of the case, it would have been equally repugnant to her feelings and destructive to her comfort, whether the change were total or partial. He referred to several

precedents in English history, to show that the power claimed by the right hon. baronet was greater than any ever before conferred on a similar occasion. Sir Robert Peel had spoken of his difficulties with respect to Canada, India, Jamaica, and more especially to the state of Ireland. But he would gain no strength with regard to those questions by imposing on Her Majesty a condition which was repugnant to her feelings. Lord John Russell further stated that the Queen was pleased to ask him whether he thought she was justified in making that refusal; and upon his answering in the affirmative, she observed that, as she had hitherto given her support to the administration, she hoped he would consider himself bound to support her in return. A cabinet council was held the next day, at which they adopted a resolution to the effect that they were not of opinion that the ladies of Her Majesty's household should be required to go out upon a change of ministry.

Sir Robert Peel said he would only reply on one point. The noble lord inquired whether Her Majesty did not say to him that it was her intention to have acted towards him with openness and fairness. Her Majesty certainly did say so, and he had conveyed that impression when he stated that nothing could be more constitutional than the whole of Her Majesty's conduct.

On the following evening a similar explanation was given by Lord Melbourne in the Upper House. Having explained why he resigned on a former occasion, the noble lord said, "And now, my lords, I frankly declare that I resume office unequivocally and solely for this reason, that I will not abandon my Sovereign in a situation of difficulty and distress, and especially when a demand is made upon Her Majesty with which I think she ought not to comply—a demand, in my opinion, inconsistent with her personal honour, and which, if acquiesced in, would make her reign liable to all the changes and variations of political parties, and render her domestic life one constant scene of unhappiness and discomfort."

The Duke of Wellington spoke in a tone of great moderation and dignity of feeling. He expressed his perfect indifference to reports. He had served his country through evil report and good report, unmoved by either one or the other. He certainly was surprised at being charged with having ill-treated his Sovereign on this occasion. He could have no object in entering into public life again, but to serve her. He said there was all possible difference between the household of the Queen Consort and the household of the Queen regnant; that of the former, who is not a political person, being comparatively immaterial. The public, he said, would not believe that the Queen had no political conversation with the ladies of her household, and that political influence was not exercised by them, particularly considering who the persons were who held those situations. He believed the history of the country afforded a number of instances in which secret and improper influences had been exercised by means of such conversations. He had a somewhat strong opinion on the subject. He had himself filled the office of the noble viscount, and had felt

the inconvenience of an anomalous influence, not exercised, perhaps, by ladies, but exerted by persons about the Court, and that simply in conversations; and the country was at that moment suffering from secret influence of the same description. He concluded by expressing his admiration of the personal demeanour of Her Majesty in those proceedings, which he characterised as displaying a readiness and firmness much beyond her age.

Lord Melbourne distinctly denied the existence of any such secret influence as that referred to by the noble duke.

These explanations in Parliament created an extraordinary sensation throughout the country. It was noticed as a singular fact that in the evening ministerial organ, the *Globe*, the following paragraph appeared on the 9th, before the negotiations with Sir Robert Peel had been made known to the public, and a day before the Queen's determination had been conveyed to Sir R. Peel:—"The determination which it is well known Her Majesty has taken, not to allow the change in the Government to interfere with the ladies of her Court, has given great offence to the Tories." The Hon. William Cowper, nephew and private secretary to Lord Melbourne, in an address to the electors of Hertford, said, "Every dictate of feeling, of honour, of loyalty, and justice impels me, at all hazards, to support our Queen in her noble resistance to the cruel attempt so unworthily made to wrest from Her Majesty a prerogative hitherto unquestioned, and to usurp the power of dismissing, at the Ministers' will, those ladies of her Court whom, from their sympathy and devotion, and from long acquaintance, Her Majesty could look upon as friends." Mr Cowper subsequently explained these remarks by declaring that the statements which had been made in Parliament since his first address had certainly removed all ground for ascribing any but proper and loyal motives to the leaders of the Tory party in their late negotiations.

Lord Brougham was extremely indignant at the conduct of the Ministers and their partisans on this occasion. He said that they had made an appeal "to the credulity and passions of the multitude by the most scandalous misrepresentations, by slander the most despicable—so ridiculous, so contemptible, that it had never been surpassed;" and he declared that it had ended "in the most signal failure, the most utter and total failure he had ever known."

Addresses were poured in to the Queen from all parts of the country, some congratulating her on the return of Lord Melbourne and Lord John Russell to office, others praying that she would again call to her councils the Duke and Sir Robert Peel. An address to these statesmen from Shrewsbury declared the indignation and contempt of the inhabitants at the calumnious charges made against them for factious ends.

The matter was discussed in the House of Lords on the 31st of May, when it was brought forward by Lord Winchilsea. Lord Melbourne, in reply, admitted that the difficulties with which he had to contend in carrying on the government of the country were still undimi-

nished, at least by any abandonment of principle on his part, and that the Government would still be conducted on those principles on which it had originally been formed—namely, the principles of progressive reform. Lord Brougham again vehemently denounced the conduct of the ministers with reference to the ladies of the bed-chamber. “The name of the Sovereign,” he said, “had been put forward and tendered to the country in lieu of all explanations, and the private personal feelings of that illustrious Princess had been made the topic of every riotous meeting—of all the demagogues who have set to work to support a sinking administration. For themselves, the Ministers had nothing to say—no measure to propose, no defence to make of their policy, but the cry of ‘The Queen! the Queen! the Queen!’ and to sum up all in the words of a kinsman of his noble friend and his private secretary—‘Sir Robert Peel’s attempt to form a Government was defeated by two ladies of the bed-chamber.’”

The record would be incomplete of this singularly interesting episode in the history of England without a passage from a speech of Lord Macaulay, delivered on the first night of the session of 1840:—

“A change has come over the spirit of a part, I hope not the larger part, of the Tory body. It was once the glory of the Tories that, through all changes of fortune, they were animated by a steady and fervent loyalty, which made even error respectable, and gave to what might otherwise have been called servility something of the manliness and nobleness of freedom. A great Tory poet, whose eminent services to the cause of monarchy had been ill-requited by an ungrateful Court, boasted that—

‘Loyalty is still the same,
Whether it win or lose the game;
True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not shined upon.’

Toryism has now changed its character. We have lived to see a monster of a faction made up of the worst parts of the Cavalier and the worst parts of the Roundhead. We have lived to see a race of disloyal Tories. We have lived to see Tories giving themselves the airs of those insolent pikemen who puffed out their tobacco smoke in the face of Charles I. We have lived to see Tories who, because they were not allowed to grind the people after the fashion of Strafford, turn round and revile the Sovereign in the style of Hugh Peters. I say, therefore, that while the leader is still what he was eleven years ago, when his moderation alienated his intemperate followers, his followers are more intemperate than ever.”

CHAPTER XLV.

Resignation of the Speaker—Election of Mr. Shaw Lefevre as his Successor—National Education—Proposed Normal Schools—Committee of the Privy Council—Difficulties on account of Religion—The Right of Inspection—Objections to Government Control over Popular Education—Speech of Lord Stanley—Lord Morpeth’s Reply—Speech of Mr. Wyse on the Evils of Popular Ignorance—Mr. C. Buller on the Claims of the Church as a National Educator—Mr. O’Connell on United Education—The Education Question in the House of Lords—Resolu-

tion against the Order in Council—The Lords’ Remonstrance to the Queen—Her Majesty’s Reply—The System of Penny Postage—Mr. Rowland Hill’s Pamphlet on Post Office Reform—Postal Statistics—Opposition of the Post Office Authorities to Mr. Hill’s Plan—A Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1838—The New Postal Law—Impediments to its Working—Results of the First Two Years—Review of the Session by Lord Lyndhurst—Lord Melbourne’s Defence of the Government—Re-construction of the Cabinet—The Proclamation—The Queen’s Speech—Banquet to the Duke of Wellington—Lord Brougham’s Eulogium—Tory Disloyalty—Party Spirit in the Army—Loyal Demonstrations in Ireland—Announcement of the Queen’s Marriage—The Case of Lady Flora Hastings.

As soon as the Ministry had been restored, the House re-assembled for the election of a new Speaker in the room of Mr. Abercrombie, who had declared his intention of resigning, having no longer sufficient strength to perform the arduous duties imposed on him by his office. When his intention was announced, he received, through Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell, the highest testimony of the esteem in which he was held by the two great parties, not only for his conduct in the chair, but also for his strenuous exertions to improve the mode of conducting the private business of the House. Mr. Abercrombie was called to the bar in 1800, and was appointed Judge Advocate General in 1827, Chief Baron of Scotland in 1830, Master of the Mint and a member of the Cabinet in 1834. He was chosen Speaker in 1835. On his resignation of that office, he was raised to the peerage as Lord Dunfermline.

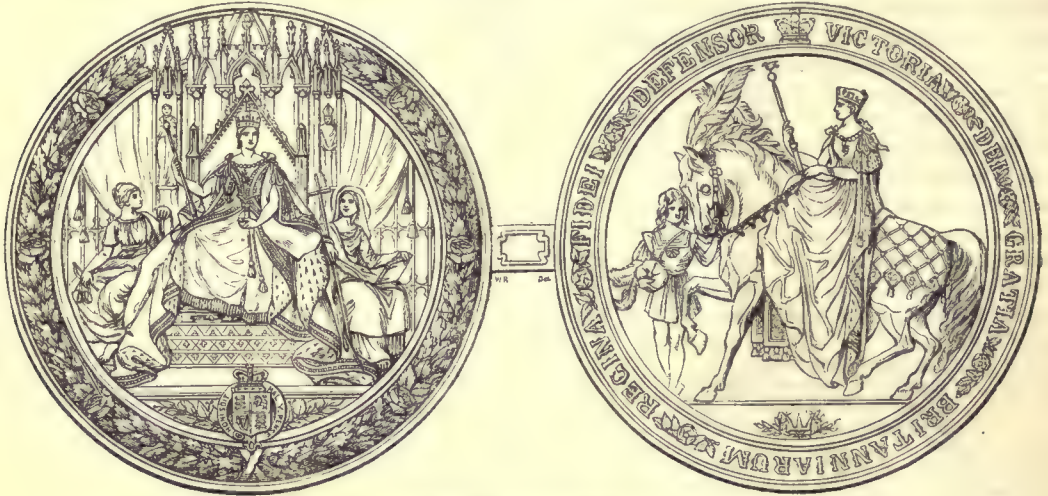
Mr. Handley rose to propose Mr. Shaw Lefevre, member for North Hants, as a person eminently qualified to succeed to the vacant chair. In the Speaker there should be spirit and courage to defend and assert the privileges of the House, and these qualities none could deny to Mr. Lefevre. He was also a man of unwearied diligence in the dispatch of business, while he possessed that urbanity of manner, and that frank and open bearing, so indispensable in a Speaker. The motion was seconded by Sir Stephen Lushington, who declared that he supported him, because his opinions were popular, because he had been an advocate of reform, because he believed that his election would satisfy the people, and that the House intended to proceed in the path of improvement till they had realised the just expectations of the country. Mr. Williams Wynn, a member of great experience and reputation in the House, proposed Mr. Goulbourn, member for the University of Cambridge. In him, he said, would be found great self-possession, vigour, and resolution, and a great degree of courtesy to temper these qualities. The late Speaker had been elected from being a member of the Cabinet, Serjeant Mitford had been elected as Speaker from the office of Attorney-General, Mr. Abbot from the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Manners Sutton from the office of Judge Advocate; and yet they were compelled to acknowledge the fairness and impartiality with which all those gentlemen had successively occupied the chair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson Patten. It was a party contest, and tested the strength of the Ministry and the Opposition. The House divided on the motion that Mr. Shaw Lefevre do take the chair, which was carried by a majority of eighteen, the numbers being 317 and 299. The new Speaker was then led to the chair

by Mr. Handley and Sir Stephen Lushington, when Lord John Russell immediately rose to present to him the congratulations of the House.

Since the year 1833, the sum of £20,000 was all that had been granted by Parliament for the popular education of this kingdom. Up to this time the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society had, without distinction of party, enjoyed an equitable proportion of the benefit of this grant. The Government were now about to propose an increase, but they determined at the same time to change the mode of its distribution, and their plan gave rise to a great deal of discussion on the subject during the session. The intentions of the Government were first made known by Lord John Russell on the 12th of February, when he presented certain papers, and gave an outline of his views. He proposed that the president of the council and other privy councillors, not exceeding five, should form a board, to consider in what manner the grants made by

the children and teachers instructed in this school should be duly trained in the principles of the Christian religion, while the rights of conscience should be respected—that it was not in their power to mature a plan for the accomplishment of their design without further consideration. In the meantime the committee recommended that no grant should thenceforth be made for the establishment or support of normal schools, or any other schools, unless the right of inspection be retained, in order to secure a conformity to the regulations and discipline established in the several schools, with such improvements as may from time to time be suggested by the committee.

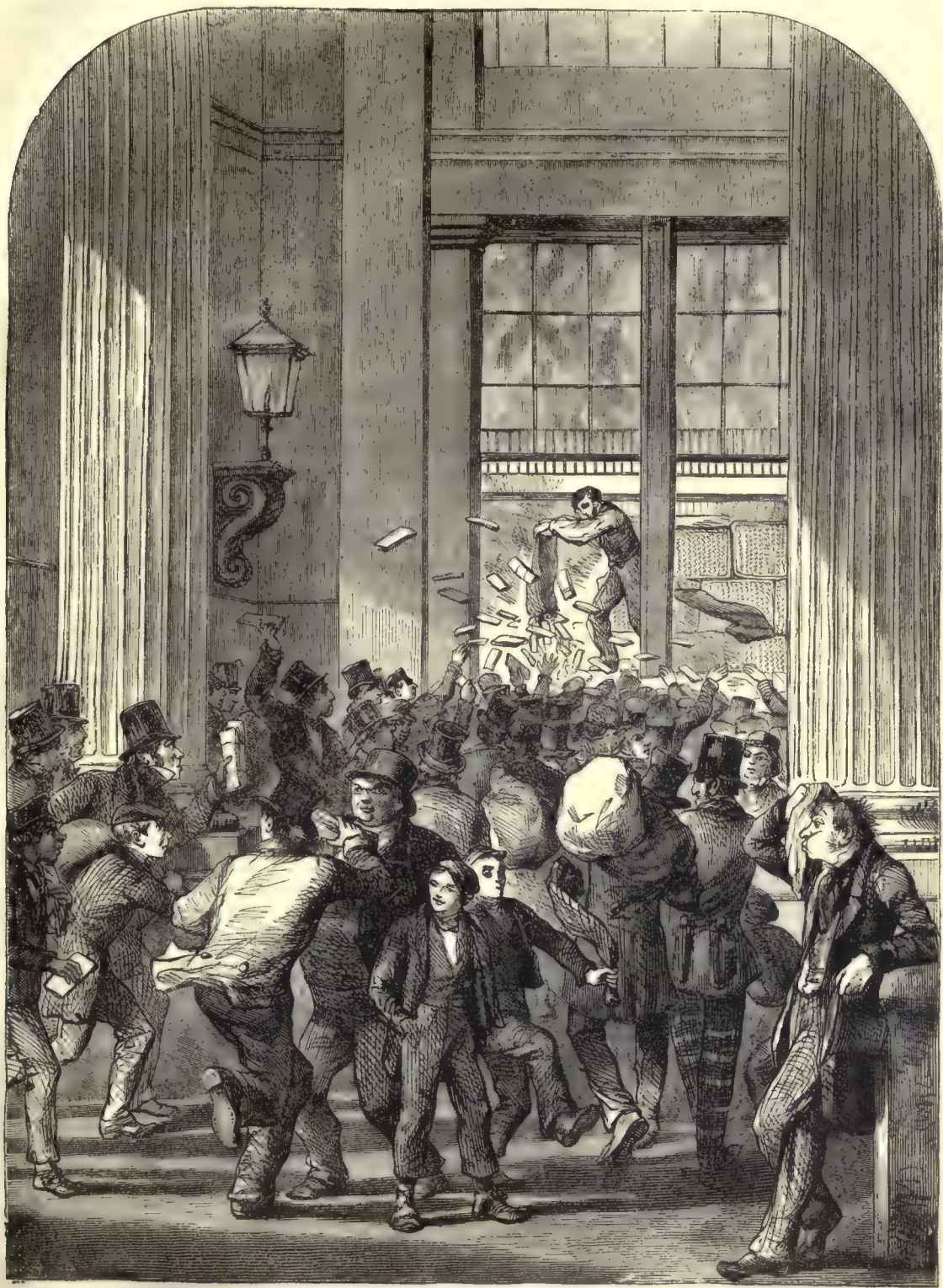
The day after the committee had adopted these resolutions, Lord Ashley moved a call of the House for the 14th of June, when Lord John Russell, in seconding the motion, stated that Government did not intend to insist upon their proposal to found a normal school. In the meantime he proposed that the intended vote of £30,000



GREAT SEAL OF VICTORIA.

Parliament should be distributed, and he thought that the first object of such a board should be the establishment of good normal and infant schools. Lord John said that he brought forward the plan not as a faultless scheme of education, but as that which, on consideration, he thought to be the most practical in the present state of the country. Sir Robert Inglis, representing the Church party, felt relieved that the noble lord proposed to do so little harm; Mr. Wyse, Chairman of the Central Society of Education, complained that he proposed to do so little good. The new committee on the 3rd of June passed several resolutions, one of which was that in their opinion the most useful applications of any sums voted by Parliament would consist in the employment of those moneys in the establishment of a normal school, under the direction of the State, and not under the management of a voluntary society. They admitted, however, that they experienced so much difficulty in reconciling the conflicting views respecting the provisions they were desirous of making—in order that

should be divided as formerly between the two societies. Lord Stanley objected to the proposition for giving a direct control over the moral and religious education of the people to a board or committee exclusively political in its character, having no fixed principle of action, and which, from the nature of its constitution, excluded those individuals who were the best entitled to superintend the education of the people. He thought it highly objectionable to place funds in the hands of a Government without any restrictions regarding their distribution, and independent of the control of Parliament—liable to be applied to the support of its own political friends; but it was doubly dangerous to entrust them to a Government powerless in itself, so weak and feeble as to be absolutely struggling for existence. He could not, he said, understand the views of those gentlemen who limited the term "education" to mere temporal instruction, apart from spiritual knowledge, and he thought that with such a system the clergy had nothing to do. But that was not the view in which education was regarded by the



THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE, LONDON, AT SIX O'CLOCK.

people of this country. They viewed it in the light in which history had always regarded it, as part and parcel of the constitution and laws of the land—not as a thing apart from religion or the Church, but rather as the peculiar province of the clergy, and as a spiritual matter to be entrusted to their superintendence. Lord Stanley concluded an elaborate speech, in which he reviewed the history of former educational grants, by moving the following amendment:—"That an address be presented to Her Majesty to rescind the order in council, for constituting the proposed Board of Privy Council."

Lord Morpeth replied to the speech of Lord Stanley, which he conceived went to the extent of separating, by a specific vote of the House, the executive Government of the country from all superintendence and control over the general education of the people. On the contrary, he would be glad to see the control of the State over education carried much farther than the plan proposed. With his feelings on the subject of national education, he should be glad to see the establishment of a permanent board that would command the respect and confidence of the country. Lord Morpeth added, "that he had no high opinion of many of the doctrines of the Roman Catholics; he had his own notions concerning Unitarian tenets, and he thought that the state of opinion prevailing in this country being Protestant and Trinitarian, those who held such opinions were entitled to have the greatest proportion of public grants applied to their benefit; but nevertheless, as long as the State thought proper to employ Roman Catholic sinews and to finger Roman Catholic gold, it could not refuse to extend to those by whom it so profited the blessing of education."

After speeches from Lord Ashley, Mr. Hawes, Lord Francis Egerton, and Mr. Stanley, the House adjourned to the 19th of June, when the debate was resumed by Mr. Wyse, member for Waterford, who had devoted his attention specially to the subject of popular and academic education. He said he was astonished to see how little was done for the diffusion of general education in this country, which boasted that it was the first in Europe in point of civilisation. The defective state of England in this respect had been productive of the greatest evils, felt not only in our moral and social relations, but also in our physical condition, in matters of every-day life, and in all the pursuits of industry. He gave some examples in agriculture: the injudicious use of lime had reduced thousands of acres in many districts to almost total infertility, while the making of manure in general was ignorantly and wastefully mismanaged, and thousands of acres of woods and forests were utterly ruined from want of knowledge of the process of vegetation. The ignorance of our population was not less striking as regarded the social condition of the lower classes. Twenty per cent. of the population of Liverpool lived in cellars—or in round numbers, 31,000 out of a population of 230,000. He referred to the ignorance revealed in the county of Kent, by the delusion of the Thomites, and stated that there was a similar deficiency of education throughout the country. In proof of this he furnished statistics. The result was, he said, that there

were 3,000,000 children in England to be supplied with instruction, half of whom were in a state of complete ignorance.

Mr. Charles Buller, with his accustomed vigour and practical sound sense, disposed of the argument that would invest the Church with the functions of national educator. He maintained that consigning the business of education to the Established Church was only an uncandid way of throwing it aside altogether. "What part of the funds of the Church, he would ask, were allocated to education? What portion of the hierarchy particularly devoted themselves to that object, and what portion of Church patronage was given to those who did so? Even those funds and dignities which at the time of the Reformation were set apart for the education of the people had been perverted from their original purpose, and turned into mere sinecures. The system of leaving education in the hands of the Established Church had had a long trial, and its effects were visible in the perverted system carried on in Sunday and charity schools, and in those wide and populous districts left totally destitute of education. What were the merits of that instruction in religion and morality which had afflicted our country with more thieves and prostitutes than any other in the world? It would be time enough to entrust the education of the people to the clergy of the Established Church when they showed some earnest of their zeal in the cause, by restoring to their original destination the funds which had formerly been devoted to the purposes of education, and when some portion of its honours were conferred upon those who humbly devoted themselves to the task of instructing the people." Education, he added, besides being the highest and most valuable of a free-man's blessings, was also the first precaution of a wise Government. It was a precaution above all others to be taken by the possessors of property with respect to the mass of the people, in a country where the singularly artificial state of society, and the great inequality of social conditions, expose us to such constant perils from the discontent and ignorance of the uneducated poor.

Mr. Disraeli, on the other hand, deprecated the Government plan as a system of centralisation, by which all minds would be thrown into the same mint, and all would come out with the same impress and superscription. This was not the same sort of education, he said, which had been so nobly advocated and supported by our forefathers—by the men who had built schools, endowed colleges, and founded universities. Mr. Gibson, though a Conservative, contended that the schoolmaster should, in all matters relating to secular education, be independent of all Church influence. The doctrine which Lord Stanley supported sounded very like Papal infallibility. If it was once set up for the guidance of the people of England, they might prefer the infallibility of Rome to the infallibility of Oxford. He did not approve of the plan of mixing up secular with religious instruction. Religion should be taught by those who devoted themselves exclusively to that purpose. He had seen the effects of the contrary system, and was satisfied it would never answer the expectations entertained on the sub-

ject. Sir Robert Inglis observed that from time immemorial education had been connected with religion, and if the clergy of the Church of Rome were ever again in the ascendant, he believed they would be the last in the world to relinquish the office of educating the people.

Considering the turn that the education question has lately taken in Ireland, the opinions expressed by Mr. O'Connell in this debate are not without interest. They had, he said, tried the efficacy of the exclusive principle, in order to prevent the advance of Catholicity: nevertheless, Catholics multiplied in Ireland, and even increased in England. "The advocates of exclusion did not, indeed, burn; they did not introduce Spanish law into this country; but they acted upon principles fatal in politics and unsound in religion. Properly speaking, such sentiments were anti-religious, for though hypocrites could be made by force, converts could be made only by persuasion. It was hoped that, at the normal schools, the education of the pupils might be carried on in common. It was considered that youth should not be separated in the business of education, that they might be reconciled to each other's presence in their early days, and meet on other points than those of repulsion. Sacred heaven! why might they not meet on other points than those of difference and hostility?"

Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Spring Rice, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Mahon, Mr. Baines, Mr. Lytton, Mr. Sheil, and Mr. Goulbourn continued this very interesting debate, in which the principles of the union of Church and State and the rights of conscience were ably discussed. The House at length divided, when the grant was voted by a majority of only two.

On the 5th of July the subject of education was introduced to the notice of the Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who defended the Church, and objected to the giving of Government grants in a manner calculated to promote religious dissent. He was answered by the Marquis of Lansdowne. The Bishop of Exeter, the Bishop of London, and several other prelates addressed the House, and gave their views on this great question. The Archbishop of Canterbury had brought forward a series of resolutions embodying the Church views of the subject. These Lord Brougham vigorously opposed. The House divided on the previous question, when the first resolution, the only one put to the vote, was carried by a majority of 111.

This resolution condemned the order in council, and in consequence of it, the Lords went in a body to the Queen to offer their remonstrance against the proposed change in the mode of distributing the grant. Her Majesty was pleased to reply in the following terms:—"I duly appreciate your zeal for the interests of religion, and your care for the Established Church. I am ever ready to receive the advice and assistance of the House of Lords, and to give to their recommendations the attention which their authority justly deserves. At the same time, I cannot help expressing my regret that you should have thought it necessary to take such a step on the present occasion. You may be assured that, deeply sensible

of the duties imposed upon me, and more especially of that which binds me to the support of the Established Church, I shall always use the powers vested in me by the constitution for the fulfilment of that sacred obligation. It is with a sense of that duty that I have thought it right to appoint a committee of my Privy Council to superintend the distribution of the grants voted by the House of Commons for public education. Of the proceedings of this committee annual reports will be laid before Parliament, so that the House of Lords will be enabled to exercise its judgment upon them; and I trust that the sums placed at my disposal will be found to have been strictly applied to the objects for which they were granted, with due respect to the rights of conscience, and with a faithful attention to the security of the Established Church."

The year 1839 will be always memorable for the establishment of the system of a uniform penny postage, one of those great reforms distinguishing the age in which we live, which are fraught with vast social changes, and are destined to fructify throughout all time with social benefits to the human race. To one mind pre-eminently the British empire is indebted for the penny postage. We are now so familiar with its advantages, and its reasonableness seems so obvious, that it is not easy to comprehend the difficulties with which Sir Rowland Hill had to contend in convincing the authorities and the public of the wisdom and feasibility of his plan.

Mr. Rowland Hill had written a pamphlet on Post Office Reform in 1837. It took for its starting point the fact that whereas the postal revenue showed for the past twenty years a positive though slight diminution, it ought to have showed an increase of £507,700 a year, in order to have simply kept pace with the growth of population, and an increase of nearly four times that amount in order to have kept pace with the growth of the analogous though far less exorbitant duties imposed on stage coaches. The population in 1815 was 19,552,000; in 1835 it had increased to 25,605,000. The stage coach duties had produced in 1815, £217,671; in 1835 they produced £498,497. The net revenue arising from the Post Office in 1815 was £1,557,291; in 1835 it had decreased to £1,540,300. In 1837 there did not exist any accurate account of the number of the letters transmitted through the General Post Office. Mr. Hill, however, was able to prepare a sufficiently approximative estimate from the data of the London district post, and from the sums collected for postage. He thus calculated the number of chargeable letters at about 88,600,000; that of franked letters at 7,400,000; and that of newspapers at 30,000,000—giving a gross total of about 126,000,000. At this period the total cost of management and distribution was £696,569. An analysis of the component parts of this expenditure assigned £426,517 to cost of primary distribution, and £270,052 to cost of secondary distribution and miscellaneous charges. A further analysis of the primary distribution expenditure gave £282,308, as the probable outgoings for receipt and delivery, and £144,209 as the probable outgoings for transit. In other words, the expenditure that hinged

upon the *distance* the letters had to be conveyed was £144,000; and that which had nothing to do with distance was £282,000. Applying to these figures the estimated number of letters and newspapers—126,000,000—passing through the office, there resulted a probable average cost of $\frac{5}{100}$ of a penny for each, of which $\frac{2}{100}$ d. was cost of transit, and $\frac{3}{100}$ d. the cost of receipt, delivery, &c. Taking into account, however, the much greater weight of newspapers and franked letters as compared with chargeable letters, the apparent average cost of transit became by this estimate about $\frac{1}{100}$ d., or less than the tenth of a penny. A detailed estimate of the cost of conveying a letter from London to Edinburgh, founded upon the average weight of the Edinburgh mail, gave a lower proportion still, since it reduced the apparent cost of transit on the average to the thirty-sixth part of a penny.

Mr. Hill inferred that if the charge for postage be made proportionate to the whole expense incurred in the receipt, transit, and delivery of the letters, and in the collection of its postage, it must be made *uniformly* the same from every post town to every other post town in the United Kingdom, unless it could be shown how we are to collect so small a sum as the thirty-sixth part of a penny. And inasmuch as it would take a nine-fold weight to make the expense of transit amount to one farthing, he further inferred that, taxation apart, the charge ought to be precisely the same for every packet of moderate weight, without reference to the number of its inclosures.

At this period the rate of postage actually imposed (beyond the limits of the London District Office) varied from fourpence to one and eightpence for a single letter, which was interpreted to mean a single piece of paper, not exceeding an ounce in weight. A second piece of paper or any other inclosure, however small, constituted a double letter. A single sheet of paper, if it at all exceeded an ounce in weight, was charged with fourfold postage. The average charge on inland general post letters was nearly ninepence for each letter.

Apart from the evils of an excessive taxation, with its multifarious results in checking communication, hampering trade, and creating an illicit traffic in letters which involved systematic deception, the effects upon the postal service itself were most injurious. On the one hand there was a complicated system of accounts, involving both great waste of time and great temptation to fraud in their settlement; on the other, a constant invitation to the violation of that first duty of postal officers—respect for the sacredness of correspondence, by making it part of their daily work to expose letters to a strong light, expressly to ascertain their contents.

These mischiefs it was proposed wholly to remove by enacting that “the charge for primary distribution—that is to say, the postage on all letters received in a post town, and delivered in the same or in any other post town in the British Isles—shall be at the uniform rate of one penny for each half-ounce; all letters and other papers, whether single or multiple, forming one packet, and not weighing more than half an

ounce, being charged one penny, and heavier packets to any convenient limit being charged an additional penny for each additional half-ounce.” And it was further proposed that stamped covers should be sold to the public at such a price as to include the postage, which would thus be collected in advance.

By the public generally, and pre-eminently by the trading public, the plan was received with great favour. By the functionaries of the Post Office it was at once denounced as ruinous, and ridiculed as visionary. Lord Lichfield, then Postmaster-General, said of it in the House of Lords, “Of all the wild and visionary schemes I ever heard, it is the most extravagant.” On another occasion, he assured the House that if the anticipated increase of letters should be realised, “the mails will have to carry twelve times as much in weight, and therefore the charge for transmission, instead of £100,000, as now, must be twelve times that amount. The walls of the Post Office would burst; the whole area in which the building stands would not be large enough to receive the clerks and the letters.” In the course of the following year (1838) petitions were poured into the House of Commons. A select committee was appointed, which held nearly seventy sittings, and examined nearly eighty-three witnesses in addition to the officers of the department. Its report (one of the most instructive and best arranged works of its class, as the report of the Revenue Commissioners was one of the worst), after carefully stating the questions which had to be considered, and the course of inquiry which had to be pursued, thus proceeded:—

“The principal points which appeared to your committee to have been established in evidence are the following:—First, the exceedingly slow advance, and occasionally retrograde movement, of the Post Office revenue during the last twenty years; second, the fact of the charge of postage exceeding the cost in a manifold proportion; third, the fact of postage being evaded most extensively by all classes of society, and of correspondence being suppressed, more especially among the middle and working classes of the people—and this in consequence, as all the witnesses, including many of the Post Office authorities, think, of the excessively high scale of taxation; fourth, the fact of very injurious effects resulting from this state of things to the commerce and industry of the country, and to the social habits and moral condition of the people; and, fifth, the fact, as far as conclusions can be drawn from very imperfect data, that whenever on former occasions larger reductions have been made in the rates, these reductions have been followed in short periods of time by an extension of correspondence, proportionate to the contraction of the rates. And as matters of inference from fact and of opinion: first, that the only remedy for the evils above stated is a reduction of the rates, and the establishment of additional deliveries and more frequent dispatches of letters; secondly, that owing to the rapid extension of railroads, there is an urgent and daily increasing necessity for making such changes; thirdly, that any moderate reduction in the rates would occasion

loss to the revenue, without in any material degree diminishing the present amount of letters irregularly conveyed, or giving rise to the growth of new correspondence; fourthly, that the principle of a low uniform rate is just in itself, and when combined with prepayment and collection by means of a stamp, would be exceedingly convenient and highly satisfactory to the public."

During the session of Parliament that followed the presentation of this report, about 2,000 petitions in favour of penny postage were presented to both Houses, and at length the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought in a bill to enable the Treasury to carry it into effect. The measure was carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 160, and became law on the 17th of August, 1839. A new but only temporary office under the Treasury was created, to enable Mr. Hill to superintend (although, as it proved, under very inadequate arrangement) the working out of his plan. The first step taken was to reduce, on the 5th of December, 1839, the London district postage to one penny, and the general inland postage to fourpence, the half ounce, except as respected places to which letters were previously carried at lower rates, those rates being continued. On the 10th of January, 1840, the uniform penny rate came into operation throughout the United Kingdom; the scale of weight advancing from one penny for each of the first two half-ounces, by gradations of twopence for each additional ounce or fraction of an ounce, up to sixteen ounces. The postage was to be prepaid, or charged at double rates, and Parliamentary franking was abolished. Postage stamps were introduced on the 6th of May following. The facilities of dispatch were soon afterwards increased, especially by the establishment of day mails. But on the important points of simplification in the internal economy of the Post Office, with the object of reducing its cost, without diminishing its working power, very little was done.

In carrying out the new measures, the officers were, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Baring) expressed it on one occasion, "unwilling horses." Nor need a word more be said in proof of the assertion than is contained in a passage of Colonel Maberly's evidence before the Postage Committee of 1843:—"My constant language to the heads of the departments was, This plan we know will fail. It is your duty to take care that no obstruction is placed in the way of it by the heads of the departments and by the Post Office. The allegation, I have not the least doubt, will be made at a subsequent period, that this plan has failed in consequence of the unwillingness of the Government to carry it into fair execution. It is our duty, as servants of the Government, to take care that no blame eventually shall fall on the Government through any unwillingness of ours to carry it into proper effect." And again:—"After the first week, it was evident, from the number of letters being so much below Mr. Hill's anticipations, that it must fail, inasmuch as it wholly rested on the number of letters, for without that you could not possibly collect the revenue anticipated. Very formidable are the prophets, who can scarcely,

under the limitations of average humanity, avoid promoting in their daily avocations the fulfilments of their own prophecies. The plan, then, had to work in the face of rooted mistrust on the part of the workers. Its author was (for the term of two years, afterwards prolonged to three) the officer, not of the Post Office, but of the Treasury. He could only recommend measures the most indispensable through the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and when Mr. Goulbourn succeeded Mr. Baring, the Chancellor was very much of Colonel Maberly's way of thinking. It happened, too, that Mr. Hill's scheme had to be carried through at a period of severe commercial depression." *

Nevertheless, the results actually attained in the first two years were briefly these: first, the chargeable letters delivered in the United Kingdom, exclusive of that part of the Government's correspondence which formerly passed free, had already increased from the rate of about 75,000,000 a year to that of 208,000,000; secondly, the London district post letters had increased from about 13,000,000 to 23,000,000, or nearly in the ratio of the reduction of the rates; thirdly, the illicit conveyance of letters was substantially suppressed; fourthly, the gross revenue, exclusive of repayments, yielded about a million and a half per annum, which was sixty-three per cent. on the amount of the gross revenue of 1839, the largest income which the Post Office had ever afforded. These results, at so early a stage, and in the face of so many obstructions, amply vindicated the policy of the new system. But by its enemies that system was loudly declared to be a failure, until the progressive and striking evidence of year after year silenced opposition by an exhaustive process.

The Parliamentary proceedings of 1839 were closed by an elaborate review of the session by Lord Lyndhurst, which he continued annually for some time while the Liberals were in power. This display took place on the 24th of August, when the noble and learned lord moved for a return of all bills that had arrived from the House of Commons since the commencement of the session, with the dates at which they were brought up. After directing the attention of the House to the Irish Municipal Corporations, the affairs of Canada, the recommendations of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the administration of justice, to which their special attention had been directed in the speech from the throne, he passed under hostile review the whole conduct of the Ministers during the session. He gave a history of the household question. He stated that the out-going administration actually carried on the negotiation with their successors, and the result was this, that the Cabinet whose resignations had been just accepted advised Her Majesty to reinstate them in their offices, for that was the constitutional inference of the conduct they had pursued. A proceeding like that had never before taken place, and he trusted in God it would never occur under any circumstances again. Adverting to the recent police acts, Lord Lyndhurst said they had

become necessary, in consequence of disturbances for which the Ministers were deeply answerable. It was they who first aroused the people; it was they who first sent forth the watchword, "Agitate, agitate, agitate!" and they it was who were responsible for the consequences that had followed. Agitation was convenient, to place them in power; agitation, up to a certain point, was necessary to maintain them there: they wished the flood to go so far, and no farther, and that there its proud waves should be stayed. But it was much easier to raise than to control the tempest. Unprincipled men made use of the multitude for their own ambitious purposes, and for the attainment of their own personal objects. They rode into power upon the shoulders of the people, and then it became inconvenient that those tumults and that violence to which they owed their elevation should be continued; then it became necessary to coerce and restrain; and then the deluded followers found out for the first time the duplicity and unworthiness of those whom in former times they eulogised and extolled.

Lord Melbourne repelled this attack on his administration with great spirit and effect. He remarked that the main business of the Legislature, after all, was not to make laws, but to consider the estimates, to watch the public expenditure, to retrench what was superfluous, to correct what was amiss, and to furnish the Crown with those supplies and subsidies which it thinks it necessary to afford. But when noble lords looked at the volume of acts they had framed, they would find it sufficiently bulky, and perhaps sufficiently faulty in its nature to produce an additional crop of statutes in the next session. Language of the grossest kind had been applied by the noble baron to the transactions which had grown out of the Jamaica bill. He used the word "intrigue." "I have heard that word from many quarters," said Lord Melbourne; "I have heard other mean, base, and vile expressions applied to the conduct of that measure through the other House. I utterly deny and repel the word. I say that there was no intrigue, no mismanagement, neither was there anything mean, base, or perfidious in the whole of the transactions which then took place. I do not like to be betrayed into the language of strong asseveration, because truth does not require such language; but I utterly disclaim the imputations and insinuations thrown out by the noble and learned lord."

Lord Brougham expressed an opinion that the country wished for the return of the Conservatives to power, because they would be compelled to grant useful reforms and measures of administrative improvement, which the present Cabinet had neither the means of carrying nor the will to introduce. The Duke of Wellington assured Lord Melbourne that his only wish had been to see a Government in the country, and he hoped that the noble viscount would now turn over a new leaf, and really govern the country in future.

The 27th of August being the day appointed for the prorogation of Parliament, the Queen, escorted by the great officers of State, took her seat in the House of Lords,

when the Speaker of the House of Commons, accompanied by some of the members, presented himself at the bar, and mentioned to Her Majesty the principal results of a most laborious session—the City Police Bill; the bill for the improvement of the discipline of prisons; the bill for enabling the magistrates to organise a constabulary force wherever it might be called for by the circumstances of the district; the bill for suppressing the Portuguese slave-trade, and the reduction of the postage. The Queen then read the speech from the throne, in which she expressed her satisfaction with the performances of the session, and especially with the measure for the reduction of the postage, which, she trusted, would be a relief and an encouragement to trade, and that, by facilitating intercourse and correspondence, it would be productive of much social advantage and improvement. Referring to the prosecution of the Chartists, the Queen said:—"It is with great pain that I have found myself compelled to enforce the law against those who no longer concealed their design of resisting by force the lawful authorities and of subverting the institutions of the country. The solemn proceedings of the courts of justice, and the fearless administration of the law by all who are engaged in that duty, have checked the first attempts at insubordination; and I rely securely upon the good sense of my people, and upon their attachment to the constitution, for the maintenance of law and order, which are as necessary for the protection of the poor as for the welfare of the wealthier classes of the community."

On the return of Lord Melbourne to power, considerable alterations took place in the construction of the Cabinet. The Marquis of Normanby changed places with Lord John Russell, who went to the Colonial office. Mr. Francis Baring was made Chancellor of the Exchequer in the place of Mr. Spring Rice, who was raised to the peerage, by the title of Baron Monteagle, and was soon after appointed Comptroller of the Exchequer, with a salary of £2,000 a year; Sir John Newport having retired from that post on a pension. Mr. Paulet Thompson succeeded Sir John Colbourne, afterwards Lord Seaton, in the government of Canada. The Earl of Clarendon became Lord Privy Seal, and Mr. Macaulay Secretary at War, with a seat in the Cabinet in the room of Viscount Howick, who had quitted the administration because he had disapproved of the political import of the changes taken altogether, and they were unalterably fixed without seeking his concurrence. Mr. Charles Wood, the brother-in-law of Lord Howick, also resigned shortly after, and was replaced by Mr. Moore O'Ferrall as Secretary of the Admiralty. Mr. Wyse became one of the Lords of the Treasury, and Mr. Sheil Vice-President of the Board of Trade, at the head of which was Mr. Labouchere.

The proceedings of Parliament having ceased to occupy public attention, the time had come for political demonstrations of various kinds through the country, giving expression to the feelings that had been excited by the state of public affairs and the conduct of the Government. The first and most remarkable of

these was a banquet, given at Dover, on the 30th of August, to the Duke of Wellington, as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, at which nearly 2,000 persons sat down to dinner. The toast of the day was proposed by Lord Brougham, who occupied a peculiar position, as a Liberal ex-Chancellor opposing a Liberal administration, and wishing to see them supplanted by their Conservative opponents. He was greeted with tumultuous cheering when he rose to propose the health of the Duke of Wellington. The speech was very eulogistic, adapted entirely to the atmosphere of excitement in which it was delivered. "Although no man," observed Lord Brougham, "on such an occasion is entitled to enter-

unbounded gratitude. And I am, therefore, asked to do this service, as if to show that no difference of opinion upon subjects, however important—no long course of opposition, however contracted, upon public principles—not even long, inveterate habits of public opposition—are able so far to stifle the natural feelings of our hearts, so far to obscure our reason, as to prevent us from feeling, as we ought, boundless gratitude for boundless merit. Neither can it pluck from our minds that admiration proportioned to the transcendent genius, in peace and in war, of him who is amongst us to-day; nor can it lighten or alleviate the painful, the deep sense, which the untired mind never can get rid of,



LADY FLORA HASTINGS.

tain any personal feelings on his own behalf, it would be affectation, it would be insolent ingratitude, were I not to express the sentiments which glow within my bosom at being made the instrument of making known those feelings which reign predominant in yours. Enough, however, of myself. Now for my mighty subject. But," he continued, "the choice you have made of your instrument—of your organ, as it were, on this occasion—is not unconnected with that subject, for it shows that on this day, on this occasion, all personal, all political feelings are quelled—all strife of party is hushed; that we are incapable, whatever may be our opinions, of refusing to acknowledge transcendent merit, and of denying that we feel the irresistible impulse of

when it is overwhelmed by a debt of gratitude too boundless to be repaid. Party—the spirit of party—may do much, but it cannot operate so far as to make us forget those services; it cannot so far bewilder the memory, and pervert the judgment, and quench and stifle the warmth of the natural affections, and eradicate from our bosoms those feelings which do us most honour and are the most unavoidable, and, as it were, dry up the kindly juices of the heart; and, notwithstanding all its vile and malignant influence on other occasions, it cannot dry up those juices of the heart so as to parch it like very charcoal, and make it almost as black. But what else have I to do? If I had all the eloquence of all the tongues ever attuned to speak,

what else can I do? How could a thousand words, or all the names that could be named, speak so powerfully—ay, even if I spoke with the tongue of an angel—as if I were to mention one word, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington? the hero of a hundred fields, in all of which his banner has waved in triumph; who never—I invoke both hemispheres to witness (bear witness, Europe! bear witness, Asia!)—who never advanced but to cover his arms with glory; the captain who never advanced but to be victorious—the mightier captain who never retreated but to eclipse the glory of his advance by the yet harder task of unwearied patience, indomitable to lassitude, the inexhaustible resources of transcendent skill, showing the wonders, the marvels of a moral courage never yet subdued. Despising all that thwarted him with ill-considered advice—neglecting all hostility, so he knew it to be groundless—laughing to scorn reviling enemies, jealous competitors, lukewarm friends—ay, hardest of all, to neglect despising even a fickle public, he cast his eye forwards as a man might—else he deserves not to command men—cast forward his eye to a time when that momentary fickleness of the people would pass away, knowing that, in the end, the people are always just to merit.”

The reply of the Duke of Wellington was a perfect contrast to this oratorical flight, in its quietness and modesty. But if the great chiefs of the Conservative party were moderate in the expression of their feelings during the vacation, some of their followers went to the opposite extreme of violence and indiscretion. At a dinner of the Conservative Registration Society, on the 30th of October, Mr. Bradshaw, the member for Canterbury, dared to speak of the young Queen in the following terms:—“Brought up under the auspices of the citizen King of the Belgians, the serf of France, and guided by his influence, the Queen thinks if the monarchy lasts her time, it is enough. But the people of England will never consent that the Crown shall be degraded and debased for the inglorious ease of any created being, nor that the personal wishes and caprices of the Sovereign shall direct the conduct of the executive. The monarchy has its rights, but it has also its duties. The people of this country will not be trampled on by Pope or Sovereign; still less will they endure that a petty German prince shall hold the fair realm of England in fee-farm. We have not forgotten the forced abdication of the second James, nor are we ignorant that the title to the throne of these realms is derived from a Protestant princess. No one can regret more than I do the growing unpopularity of the Queen and her Court. But look at the composition of that Court, and its acts. The courtiers and ministers are identical. Their petty and criminal intrigues are carried into every department of the State. The courts of former sovereigns have been as frivolous, more vicious even, than the present; but the government of the country and the direction of public affairs have been carried on by statesmen of known and recognised ability, honour, and independence—men who were neither the boon-companions of the Sovereign, nor the willing slaves of his follies and caprices. I believe,

in my conscience, that the favourite equerries are younger, better looking, and better dressed men than Sir Robert Peel; that Lord Melbourne can tell a tale meet for a lady's ear much better than the Duke of Wellington; and that neither Lord Stanley nor Sir James Graham can compete with my Lord Normanby in the getting up of a pageant; but are these the qualities which the people of England prize so much as to sacrifice to them their religion, their national honour, and the care of their ancient institutions?”

This scandalously unchivalrous and disloyal speech was all through vehemently applauded by the audience. The intemperate spirit of party by which it was dictated was not, however, confined to civilians. About the same time the colonel and officers of the 20th Regiment were present at a dinner of the Conservative Association at Ashton-under-Lyne, where similar speeches were delivered. This fact was brought under the notice of the Horse Guards, and on the 3rd of November the Adjutant-General forwarded to Colonel Thomas an extract of “expressions most insulting and disrespectful towards the Queen,” which were reported in the *Times* to have been used by Mr. Roby on that occasion; and the colonel was requested to state whether he had heard that language, and whether he had immediately expressed his disapprobation of those sentiments. He added that it was most painful to Lord Hill to know that officers of the army were present on such an occasion. Colonel Thomas replied rather stiffly that no expression used by Mr. Roby conveyed to his mind the slightest disrespect, much less insult to the Queen, and he flattered himself that his faithful service of upwards of forty-one years might have assured Lord Hill that he would not have been wanting, if such an impression had been conveyed to him. He had been invited, as a member of Parliament, to meet Sir Francis Burdett. A further explanation having been demanded, and proving unsatisfactory, the Commander-in-Chief directed a communication to be sent to Sir Charles Napier, commander of the northern district, in which he said:—“In this state of a case on every account very distressing to him, it remains for Lord Hill but to order that you convey to Colonel Thomas, and to every other officer belonging to the forces now serving under your command who was present upon the above occasion, the expression of his lordship's most pointed and decided displeasure, reminding them that as military servants they are bound to confine themselves to their military duties, and that when they thus venture to connect themselves with any party association, under any circumstances or upon any pretence whatever, they incur a heavy responsibility, and expose themselves to the heaviest blame.” Sir Charles Napier was directed to have this letter read to the officers of the regiment, and to forbid any further discussion of the subject.

In proportion to the violence of the manifestations of disloyalty among the Tories, was the fervour of loyalty evinced by Mr. O'Connell and his followers in Ireland. At a meeting at Bandon, on the 5th of December, the great agitator, in the midst of tremendous cheering, the

entire assembly rising in response to the concluding appeal, said :—"We must be, we are loyal to our young and lovely Queen. God bless her! We must be, we are attached to the throne, and to the lovely being by whom it is filled. She is going to be married. God bless the Queen! I am a father and a grandfather; and in the face of heaven I pray with as much honesty and fervency for Queen Victoria as I do for any of my own progeny. The moment I heard of the daring and audacious menaces of the Tories towards the Sovereign, I promulgated through the press my feelings of detestation, and my determination on the matter. Oh, if I be not greatly mistaken, I'd get in one day five hundred thousand brave Irishmen to defend the life, the person, and the honour of the beloved young lady by whom England's throne is now filled. Let every man in the vast and multitudinous assembly stretched out before me who is loyal to the Queen, and would defend her to the last, lift up his right hand. There are hearts in those hands. I tell you that if necessity required there would be swords in them."

In the meanwhile, Her Majesty was pleased to communicate to the members of the Privy Council assembled at Buckingham Palace on the 23rd of November, her intention of contracting an alliance with a Prince of the fortunate family of Saxe Coburg and Gotha. The declaration was made by Her Majesty in the following terms :—"I have caused you to be summoned at the present time in order that I may acquaint you with my resolution in a matter which deeply concerns the welfare of my people and the happiness of my future life. It is my intention to ally myself in marriage with the Prince Albert of Saxe Coburg and Gotha. Deeply impressed with the solemnity of the engagement which I am about to contract, I have not come to this decision without mature consideration, nor without feeling a strong assurance that, with the blessing of Almighty God, it will at once secure my domestic felicity, and serve the interests of my country. I have thought fit to make this resolution known to you at the earliest period, in order that you may be fully apprised of a matter so highly important to me and to my kingdom, and which, I persuade myself, will be most acceptable to all my loving subjects." Upon this announcement the Council humbly requested that Her Majesty's most gracious declaration might be made public, which Her Majesty was pleased to order accordingly.

The approaching marriage of the Queen was anticipated by the nation with satisfaction. We have seen, from the height to which party spirit ran, that "the divinity that doth hedge a king," and should more effectually hedge a queen, was not able to protect Her Majesty from the slanders of frantic partisans; and it was therefore extremely desirable that she should have a husband to stand between her and such unmanly attacks as those of Mr. Bradshaw. An occurrence, however, took place in the early part of the year very painful in its nature, which added much to the unpopularity of the Court. This was the cruel suspicion which was cast upon Lady Flora Hastings by some of the ladies

about the Queen, and is supposed to have caused her early death. Lady Flora was the daughter of the Marquis of Hastings, the descendant of a race distinguished by their services to the British Crown. She was one of the ladies in attendance on the Duchess of Kent; and soon after her arrival at Court it was generally surmised, from the appearance of her person, that she had been privately married, the consequence of which was, that in order to clear her character, which was perfectly blameless, she was compelled to submit to the humiliation of a medical examination. The facts of the case were stated by Sir James Clark, who was very much censured for the part he took in the matter. On the 10th of January he was consulted by Lady Flora Hastings, who had that day arrived from Scotland, and he prescribed some remedies for an affection of the stomach, which had the desired effect. But certain symptoms remained which attracted attention. About the 1st of February, therefore, he was sent for by Lord Melbourne, and informed that a communication had been made by Lady Tavistock respecting Lady Flora Hastings, whose appearance had given rise to a suspicion in the palace that she might be privately married. Sir J. Clark admitted that in his opinion the suspicion was countenanced by appearances, but they both agreed that no step should then be taken in the matter. From that time, however, the condition of her ladyship caused the doctor considerable anxiety. It could be accounted for only by pregnancy or disease. The latter supposition was at variance with the state of her general health, which was subject to very little derangement. Lady Portman, then the lady-in-waiting upon the Queen, soon after questioned Sir James Clark upon the point, and observed that, for the sake of Lady Flora Hastings herself, as well as for the Court, it was necessary that the matter should be cleared up. Sir James Clark having conveyed to Lady Flora this very painful communication, she at once denied that there were any grounds whatever for the suspicion, and named Sir Charles Clarke, who, she said, had known her from childhood, as the physician she would wish to be called in; but she declined, notwithstanding earnest entreaties, to see him that day. "This refusal," says Sir James, "after the reasons which I had given, lessened very considerably the effect upon my mind of her ladyship's denial." He then communicated with the Duchess of Kent, who immediately expressed her entire disbelief of anything injurious to Lady Flora's character. The result, however, of a consultation with Her Royal Highness was, that Sir Charles Clarke was called in; and Lady Flora requested that Lady Portman might be called in also, which was done. Lady Flora's maid was also in attendance. The two doctors then signed the following certificate, dated Buckingham Palace, February 17th, 1839 :—"We have examined with great care the state of Lady Flora Hastings, with a view to determine the existence or non-existence of pregnancy; and it is our opinion, although there is an enlargement of the stomach, that there are no grounds for suspicion that pregnancy does exist, or ever did exist."

As an excuse for his own erroneous impression, Sir James Clark says: "If even Sir Charles Clarke did not venture to express a positive opinion until after a careful examination, it will be readily conceded that no other person could have done so without recurring to a similar proceeding; and if anything farther were required to establish the difficulties of this very peculiar case, and the heavy responsibility attaching to a decision on it, there are other facts connected with it which prove, in the most unequivocal manner, both the one and the other—facts which do not throw the slightest shade of doubt on the purity of Lady Flora, nor are matter of blame to any one, but which it is not necessary to bring before the public."

Lady Flora Hastings died on July 5th, and the *post-mortem* examination established the fact that her death was occasioned by extensive disease, dating its origin at some former and distant period of time; and yet such was the obscurity of the symptoms which accompanied it during life, that its nature became evident only a few weeks before her death. This event, however, excited very strong feelings in the public mind with regard to the treatment she had received. She herself had described Sir James Clark's manner, in communicating the suspicion to her, as "violent and coarse;" and her maid deposed that the conduct of Sir James Clark and Lady Portman was unnecessarily abrupt, indelicate, and unfeeling. These accusations were publicly preferred in a letter from the Marquis of Hastings; but they were denied in the most positive manner by Sir James Clark, who concludes his statement of the case as follows:—"Deeply painful as it has been to me to see my name so long associated with alleged acts and motives at which my very nature revolts, the consciousness of my own rectitude, the friendship of those who from long and intimate acquaintance know me to be incapable of the conduct imputed to me, and a firm reliance on justice being ultimately done to all parties, have supported me under an accumulation of attacks, such as few professional men can have been subjected to."

In the correspondence published on the subject is a letter to the Queen from Lady Flora's mother, the Marchioness of Hastings, which, to insure safe delivery, was entrusted to Lord Melbourne, who was instructed to return the following answer:—"The allowance which Her Majesty is anxious to make for the natural feelings of a mother upon such an occasion, tended to diminish that surprise which could not be otherwise than excited by the tone and substance of your ladyship's letter. Her Majesty commands me to convey to your ladyship the expression of her deep concern at the unfortunate circumstances that have recently taken place. Her Majesty hastened to seize the first opportunity of testifying to Lady Flora Hastings her conviction of the error of the impression that had prevailed, and is still most desirous to do everything in her power to soothe the feelings of Lady Flora and her family." Before this letter was received, Lady Hastings had written to the Premier a very angry letter, complaining that no steps

had been taken to repair, as far as reparation was possible, the indignity offered to her daughter in the palace. She said: "The nature and manner of the course pursued in this atrocious conspiracy—for it admits of no other name—are unexampled; and yet Sir James Clark remains Her Majesty's physician. I claim at your hands, my lord, as a mark of public justice, the removal of Sir James Clark." To this Lord Melbourne replied: "The demand which your ladyship's letter makes upon me is so unprecedented and objectionable, that even the respect due to your ladyship's sex, rank, family, and character, would not justify me in more—if, indeed, it authorised so much—than acknowledging that letter, for the sole purpose of acquainting your ladyship that I have received it."

The death of Lady Flora, which was believed to be hastened, if not caused, by the painful ordeal through which she had passed, naturally intensified the public feeling with regard to these transactions at Court.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Opening of the Session of 1840—The Queen's Speech—The Approaching Royal Marriage—Protestantism of the Prince—The Address, and Her Majesty's Reply—Naturalisation of the Prince—His Precedence—His Income—Proposal of Fifty Thousand Pounds—Speech of Sir Robert Peel—Defeat of the Government—The House of Commons and the Queen's Bench—The Great Privilege Question—Actions against the Printers of the House of Commons—The Sheriffs Arrested for Contempt—Proceedings relating to the Privileges of the House—An Act for Authorising the Publication of Parliamentary Papers—Great Debate on Want of Confidence in the Ministry—Speeches of Sir J. Y. Buller, Sir George Grey, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Lytton, Lord Howick, Sir James Graham, Mr. Macaulay, Lord Stanley, Lord Morpeth, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord John Russell.

THE session of 1840 was opened by the Queen in person. The first two paragraphs of the royal speech contained the following announcement:—

"My Lords and Gentlemen,—Since you have last assembled, I have declared my intention of allying myself in marriage with the Prince of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. I humbly implore that the Divine blessing may prosper this union, and render it conducive to the interests of my people, as well as my own domestic happiness; and it will be to me a source of the most lively satisfaction to find the resolution I have taken approved of by my Parliament. The constant proofs I have received of your attachment to my person and family, persuade me that you will enable me to provide for such an establishment as may appear suitable to the rank of the Prince and the dignity of the Crown."

The speech contained nothing else very definite or very interesting; and the debate on the address was remarkable for nothing more than its references to the royal marriage. The Duke of Wellington warmly concurred in the expressions of congratulation. He had been summoned to attend Her Majesty in the Privy Council when this important announcement was first made. He had heard that the precedent of the reign of George III. had been followed in all particulars except one, and that was the declaration that the Prince was a Protestant.

He knew he was a Protestant, he was sure he was of a Protestant family; but this was a Protestant state, and although there was no doubt about the matter, the precedent of George III. should have been followed throughout, and the fact that the Prince was a Protestant should be officially declared. The Duke, therefore, moved the insertion of the word Protestant before the word Prince in the first paragraph of the address. Lord Melbourne considered the amendment altogether superfluous. The Act of Settlement required that the Prince should be a Protestant, and it was not likely that Ministers would advise Her Majesty to break through the Act of Settlement. The precedent which the Duke had endeavoured to establish was not a case in point, for George III. did not declare to the Privy Council that the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was a Protestant, but only that she was descended from a long line of Protestant ancestors. All the world knew that the Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg was a Protestant, and that he was descended from the most emphatically Protestant house in Europe. To the eldest branch of his family, the Protestant religion owed its existence, and the Elector of Saxony lost his throne for his adherence to the Protestant cause. The Prince would not be more a Protestant because the House called him so. The amendment was therefore perfectly immaterial and unnecessary. Lord Winchilsea, on the other hand, maintained that changes had taken place in the history of the Coburg family, which rendered it absolutely necessary that the declaration should be made. He mentioned, moreover, as proof that Lord Melbourne was not a safe guide in religious matters, the case of Mr. Owen, the celebrated socialist, whom he had introduced to Her Majesty. Several other noble lords having spoken, the address as amended was agreed to. It was adopted in the Commons without any amendment. It, as a matter of course, expressed approval of the Queen's resolution to get married, and of the choice she had made. Her Majesty replied to the address in the following terms:—

"I receive with very great satisfaction your loyal and affectionate address upon an occasion so deeply affecting the happiness of my future life. I thank you for your support and concurrence in my resolution, and I am much gratified by the opinion which you have expressed of the Prince, and which I am confident he will justify. I thank you for your assurance that you will concur in the measures which may be necessary to provide for such an establishment as may be suitable to the rank of the Prince and the dignity of the Crown. I shall anxiously endeavour to make my reign conducive to the happiness of all classes of my people."

On the 20th of January a bill was introduced to the House of Lords, for the naturalisation of the Prince. By this act, which passed the next day through the House of Commons, the Prince was declared already exempt, by an act passed in the sixth year of George IV., from the obligation which had previously bound all persons to receive the Lord's Supper within one month before exhibition of a bill for their naturalisation. And the bill was permitted to be read the second time, with-

out his having taken the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, as required by an act passed in the first year of George I. But on the second reading in the House of Lords, the Duke of Wellington objected that it was not merely a bill for naturalising the Prince, but that it also contained a clause which would enable him, "during the term of his natural life, to take precedence in rank after Her Majesty in Parliament, and elsewhere as Her Majesty might think fit and proper," any law, statute, or custom, to the contrary, notwithstanding. The Duke of Wellington stated that as the title of the bill said nothing about precedence, the House had not received due notice of its contents; he therefore moved the adjournment of the debate. Lord Melbourne remarked that the omission was purely accidental, and in his opinion of no importance; at the same time he admitted that this bill did differ in form from other similar bills, as it gave the Queen power to bestow on Prince Albert a higher rank than was assigned to Prince George of Denmark, or to Prince Leopold. But the reason for the difference was to be found in the relative situation of the parties. Lord Brougham, however, pointed out a practical difficulty that might possibly arise. According to the proposed arrangement, if the Queen should die before there was any issue from the marriage, the King of Hanover would reign in this country, and his son would be Prince of Wales. Prince Albert would thus be placed in the anomalous position of a foreign naturalised Prince, the husband of a deceased Queen, with a higher rank than the Prince of Wales. Lord Londonderry decidedly objected to giving a foreign Prince precedence over the blood royal. In consequence of this difference of opinion, the debate was adjourned till the following week, when the Lord Chancellor stated that he would propose that power should be given to the Crown to allow the Prince to take precedence next after any heir apparent to the throne. Subsequently, however, Lord Melbourne expressed himself so anxious that it should pass with all possible expedition, that he would leave out everything about precedence, and make it a simple naturalisation bill, in which shape it immediately passed.

The question of the Prince's income was not so easily disposed of. On the 24th of January, Lord John Russell, having moved that the paragraph relating to the subject should be read, quoted, as precedents for the grant he was about to propose, the instances of Prince George of Denmark, Prince Leopold, and Queen Adelaide. Queen Anne granted to Prince George £50,000 a year, one moiety of which was to be paid out of the Excise, and the other out of the Post Office. Prince Leopold married the heiress presumptive to the throne. There was no certainty that the Princess would ever be queen of this country, even though she survived her father; yet a sum of £60,000 a year was granted for the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold, £50,000 of that sum being settled on Prince Leopold in the event of survivorship. In 1831 a select committee upon the Civil List was appointed, and on their recommendation £110,000 was allotted by Parliament to the privy purse of William and Adelaide, of which £50,000

was for the Queen. As far, therefore, as he could judge by precedent in these matters, £50,000 a year was the sum generally allotted to princes in the situation of the Prince Consort to the Queen of this country. He therefore moved—"That Her Majesty be enabled to grant an annual sum not exceeding £50,000 out of the Consolidated Fund, as a provision to Prince Albert, to commence on the day of his marriage with Her Majesty, and to continue during his life."

The debate having been adjourned for a few days, Mr. Hume moved, as an amendment, that only £21,000 should be granted. In his opinion, no grant was necessary during the lifetime of the Queen. "What," he asked, "was to be done with it?" He warned the House against setting down a young man in London with so much money in his pockets. Besides, while the country suffered so much privation, and the people laboured under such heavy burdens, they had no money to spare for ministering to the profusion and extravagance of the Court. They would find many better ways of disposing of their surplus funds. They devoted £70,000 a year to the royal stables, while they gave only £30,000 a year for the education of the people. Colonel Sibthorpe moved that £30,000 be the sum allowed. Mr. Goulbourn was in favour of that sum. The amendment proposed by Mr. Hume was lost by a majority of 305 against 38.

When Colonel Sibthorpe's amendment became the subject of debate, Lord John Russell, alluding to professions of respect made by Lord Elliot for Her Majesty, and of care for her comfort, said: "I cannot forget that no sovereign of this country has been insulted in such a manner as her present Majesty has been." Lord Elliot and Sir James Graham rose immediately to protest against this insinuation, as in all respects most uncalled-for and unjustifiable. Sir James Graham considered it a large and generous disposition of the public money to give Prince Albert £30,000 for his establishment, which was £9,000 a year more than was enjoyed by the royal family in a direct line of succession to the throne. "Perhaps," he said, "in the critical times in which they lived, their loyalty might be brought to the test; something better than words might be necessary, and then the noble lord would see that the party with whom he had the honour of acting had not forgotten their duty to their sovereign." With the exception of Sir R. Inglis, all the members of the Conservative party who addressed the House were in favour of Colonel Sibthorpe's amendment.

Sir Robert Peel at length rose to repel the insinuation of Lord John Russell, which he stigmatised as unjust, and said it was unnecessarily introduced, contrary to all Parliamentary rules and principles, and in a manner unworthy of the situation which the noble lord occupied as a minister of the Crown and leader of the House of Commons. The right honourable baronet said it would be base, indeed, in him to be influenced by the events of last May, relating to the Queen's household, but it would also be equally base and cowardly to shrink from the performance of his duty, from fear lest such a motive should be imputed to him.

He did not give his vote for the smaller sum on account of the temporary distress that prevailed, nor because financial difficulties were felt, for he did not believe the country was unable to make a proper allowance for the consort of the Sovereign. He felt that he might by his vote give temporary displeasure, but he was conscious that he only consulted the permanent interests of the Crown in saving it from the unpopularity that would attend such an extravagant vote. Could any man deny that the universal opinion of the country was that the grant was too great? "I will not," he continued, "condescend to rebut the charge of want of loyalty and respect. I have no compunctions of conscience on that ground. I never made a concurrence of political sentiments on the part of the Sovereign a condition of my loyalty. I have never been otherwise than respectful towards my Sovereign. Not one word, not one breath of disloyalty to the Crown, or any members of the royal family, however adverse their political sentiments were to mine, has ever escaped my lips; and in the performance of my duty to this House, and to the Crown, I should deem myself unworthy of the position which I hold, if, in my station as a member of the House of Commons, I hesitated to take a straightforward course without needless professions of loyalty, or without a defence against accusations which I believe to be utterly unfounded."

The House then divided on the amendment, which was carried by a very large majority, the numbers being—ayes, 262; noes, 158: majority for the sum of £30,000, 104. Such a signal defeat of the Government, on a question in which the Sovereign naturally felt a deep interest, was calculated to produce a profound impression upon the country, and under ordinary circumstances would have led to a change of ministry; but it was regarded as the result of an accidental combination between heterogeneous materials, and therefore Lord Melbourne did not feel called upon to resign.

A remarkable conflict took place this year between the jurisdiction of the House of Commons and that of the Court of Queen's Bench, which excited great interest at the time, and has important bearings upon the constitutional history of the country. The following is a brief narrative of the facts out of which it arose:—In the year 1835 a bill was proposed in the House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond for the purpose of appointing inspectors of prisons. The inspectors were appointed, and, in the discharge of their duty, reported on the state of Newgate. The House ordered the report to be printed and sold by the Messrs. Hansard. In this report it was stated that the inspectors of that gaol found amongst the books used by the prisoners one printed by John Joseph Stockdale, in 1827, which they said was "a book of the most disgusting nature, and the plates are obscene and indecent in the extreme." On the 7th of November, 1836, Stockdale brought an action for libel against the Messrs. Hansard for the sale of this report, which was alleged to be false. Sir John Campbell, who was counsel for the defendants, argued that the report was a privileged publication, being printed by the authority of



THE SHERIFFS APPEARING IN THE CUSTODY OF THE SERJEANT-AT-ARMS BEFORE THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH.

the House of Commons, and on that ground they were entitled to a verdict. But Lord Denman, in his charge to the jury, said: "I entirely disagree from the law laid down by the learned counsel for the defendants. My direction to you, subject to a question hereafter, is, that the fact of the House of Commons having directed Messrs. Hansard to publish all the Parliamentary Reports is no justification for them, or for any bookseller who publishes a parliamentary report containing a libel against any man."

In addition, however, to the plea of "Not guilty," there was a plea of justification, on the ground that the allegations were true, and on this the jury found a verdict for the defendants. On the 16th of February, 1837, the Messrs. Hansard communicated the facts to the House of Commons. A select committee was consequently appointed to examine precedents, and report upon the question of its privileges in regard to the publication of its reports and other matters. They reported in favour of the privilege which would protect any publication ordered by the House of Commons. This report was brought up on the 30th of May, 1839, when the following resolutions were adopted: "1st. That the power of publishing such of its reports, votes, and proceedings, as it shall deem necessary or conducive to the public interests, is an essential incident to the constitutional freedom of Parliament, more especially of this House, as the representative portion of it. 2nd. That by the laws and privileges of Parliament, this House has the sole and exclusive jurisdiction to determine upon the existence and extent of its privileges; and that the institution or prosecution of any action, suit, or other proceedings, for the purpose of bringing them into discussion before any court or tribunal elsewhere than a Parliament, is a high breach of such privilege, and renders all parties concerned therein amenable to its just displeasure and to the punishment consequent thereon."

Another action was brought by Stockdale; the printers were directed to plead the privilege of the House. The court gave judgment against the plea, and damages were afterwards assessed, which the House of Commons ordered the Messrs. Hansard to pay. On the 31st of July those gentlemen again communicated to the House, that similar legal proceedings were threatened by Mr. Polae, on account of alleged defamatory matter in a Parliamentary report on the state of New Zealand. The House of Commons passed another resolution, re-affirming its privilege, and directing Hansard not to take any defence to the threatened action, which, however, was not proceeded with. But Stockdale, on the 26th of August, 1839, commenced a third action for the publication of the report, which continued to be sold. The printers then served him with formal notice of the resolutions of the House and of their intention not to plead. Stockdale, notwithstanding, on the 26th of October, filed a declaration in the said action, wherein the damages were laid at £50,000; and on the 1st of November, interlocutory judgment was signed for want of a plea. On the 2nd of November, notice was served

that a writ of inquiry of damages would be executed before the Sheriff of Middlesex on the 12th of the same month. The writ of inquiry was accordingly executed, when the sheriff's jury assessed the damages at £600; the consequence of which was that the sheriff took possession of the printing-office, premises, and stock-in-trade of the printers of the House of Commons. But he was placed in a dilemma with regard to the sale, which was ultimately prevented by the amount of damages being paid into the sheriff's office on the night previous. On the 16th of January following, Lord John Russell presented a petition from the Messrs. Hansard, which recited the facts of the case, and prayed for such relief as, under the circumstances, the House might think fit. The course which Lord John recommended was, that the persons who had violated the privileges of the House should be summoned to their bar. He therefore moved that Stockdale, with Burton Howard, his attorney, William Evans, the sheriff, the under-sheriff, and the deputy-under-sheriff, be summoned to the bar of the House. There was a long discussion on the legality of the course to be pursued. The motion was carried by a majority of 119. On the 17th of January, therefore, Stockdale was called to the bar, and interrogated by the Attorney-General, as to the facts of the different actions. He was then ordered to withdraw, and in the course of the discussion that followed a scene occurred.

Sir Robert Inglis, who spoke after Mr. O'Connell, asked, "But was it for the honourable and learned gentleman, who had so traduced the women of England—" Mr. O'Connell, interrupting, exclaimed, "That is a lie." Sir Robert Inglis appealed to the Speaker, who called upon Mr. O'Connell to withdraw the expression, which he did, stating at the same time that the charge against him of having traduced the women of England was totally false.

The House then resolved that Stockdale should be committed to the custody of the serjeant-at-arms. It was also resolved that the sheriffs should be called to the bar. They were accordingly brought in by the serjeant-at-arms, dressed in their scarlet robes. On the 21st of January they petitioned the House, expressing their sorrow for having incurred its displeasure, and stated that they believed that they had only done their duty towards their Sovereign and the Queen's Bench, whose sworn officers they were. They prayed, therefore, that they might not be amerced or imprisoned. Lord John Russell moved that the sheriffs, having been guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House, should be committed to the custody of the serjeant-at-arms, which was carried by a majority of 101. The same course was adopted with regard to Mr. Howard, the attorney, who was called in and reprimanded by the Speaker.

But the Queen's Bench was by no means disposed to surrender its own privileges, even to the House of Commons. On the 24th of January Sir William Gosssett, serjeant-at-arms, appeared at the bar of the House, and said that he had last evening been served with a writ of habeas corpus, commanding him to bring up the bodies of the sheriffs, William Evans, Esq., and John Wheelton,

Esq., then in his custody. The Attorney-General rose, and said he had no hesitation in advising the House to direct the serjeant-at-arms to return answer to the Court of Queen's Bench, that he held these two individuals in custody by the warrant of the Speaker. That was the safe, the dignified, the constitutional course. Let it not be supposed that they thereby submitted their privileges to a court of law. It had been determined by a long series of authorities that that House had the power to commit for contempt, and that when it did so commit, no court of law whatever had the power to inquire into the cause of the committal. He apprehended that on the warrant being read, the Court of Queen's Bench could do nothing else than say that the prisoners must return to the custody from which they came. He then moved a resolution to that effect, which was adopted.

On the next day, January 25th, the serjeant-at-arms appeared in the Court of Queen's Bench, with the two sheriffs in his custody, dressed in their robes of office. The affair excited the liveliest interest, and the court and passages were crowded to excess. They were loudly cheered as they passed into court. The bench was then empty, the whole of the fifteen judges having been engaged elsewhere during the day, hearing a point argued which had been reserved at the trials of Frost, Williams, and Jones. In a short time, however, Lord Denman, the Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Littledale, Mr. Justice Williams, and Mr. Justice Coleridge took their seats, when Sir William Gossett handed in his return. Counsel having been heard, the judges gave their opinion *seriatim*, and held unanimously that the return to the habeas corpus was good and sufficient, that they could not presume anything, but must take it that the sheriffs had in some way or other committed a breach of the privileges of the House of Commons, and that, therefore, they could only remand them to the custody of the serjeant-at-arms; and Sir William returned from the court with the sheriffs in his custody.

On the 3rd of February, Mr. Darby brought forward a motion that the sheriffs should be discharged from the custody of the serjeant-at-arms. This gave rise to a long and animated debate. The Attorney-General opposed the motion, contending that until they made their submission, the House could not dismiss them with due regard to its dignity. Sir William Follett replied to the arguments of the Attorney-General, and was answered by the Solicitor-General. The debate was adjourned, and was resumed on the 7th. At its conclusion the House divided on the question that the sheriffs be discharged, which was negatived by a majority of 71. On the 12th, Mr. Sheriff Wheelton was discharged on account of ill-health, a motion for the release of the other sheriff having been rejected.

The House, meantime, seemed to have been getting still more involved in the meshes of these difficulties. Stockdale commenced a fourth and a fifth action against Hansard; an order was issued for the arrest of his attorney for contempt, and he was ultimately lodged in Newgate. But he afterwards brought actions against

all the officers of the House that had been concerned in his arrest and had searched his premises. On the 17th of February Lord John Russell informed the House that he had a petition to present from Messrs. Hansard to the effect that a fifth action had been commenced against them by Stockdale for the same cause as before. It was then moved that Stockdale, and the son of Howard, his attorney, by commencing this action, had been guilty of a contempt of the House. This was carried by a majority of 71.

Ultimately the second sheriff, Mr. Evans, was released from confinement. Stockdale, and the Messrs. Howard, senior and junior, were also set at liberty. These vexatious proceedings, including a great number of debates and divisions, led to the passing of an act for more clearly defining the privileges of the House of Commons, which had made itself unpopular by its course of proceeding towards the sheriffs, who had only discharged duties which they could not have evaded without exposing themselves to the process of attachment. The House having once submitted the case to the Court of Queen's Bench, by pleading in the action, was bound to respect the judgment pronounced by that court, or to bring it under the review of a court of error, in a legal and constitutional manner.

On the 5th of March, however, Lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in a bill relative to the publication of Parliamentary papers. He said, in the course of his speech, that at all periods of our history, whatever might have been the subject—whether it regarded the privileges of Parliament, or the rights of the Crown or any of the constituted authorities—whenever any great public difficulty had arisen, the Parliament in its collective sense, meaning the Crown, Lords, and Commons, had been called in to solve those difficulties. With regard to the measure he was about to propose, he would take care to state in the preamble of the bill that the privilege of the House was known only by interpretation of the House itself. He proposed that publications authorised by either House of Parliament should be protected, and should not be liable to prosecution in any court of common law. Leave was given to introduce the bill by a majority of 149; the House went into committee on the bill on the 13th of March, and it passed the third reading on the 20th of the same month. It was read a second time in the Lords on the 6th of April; and the royal assent was given to it by commission on the 14th of the same month.

At the commencement of the session a notice of a motion of want of confidence in the Ministry was given by Sir John Yarde Buller. He assigned as reasons for bringing forward the motion, the disturbed and unsatisfactory state of the country, which he ascribed to the system of popular agitation, "nurtured and fostered," as he alleged, by the Ministers during the preceding two years. He cited as proofs the riots at Birmingham, and the insurrection at Monmouth. In Ireland a similar system had been pursued. The family and connections of the chief agitator had been placed in situations of emolument, and he had himself been received as a guest

at the Lord Lieutenant's table. Ministers had also entered into an apparent collusion with the enemies of the Established Church. On coming into office they had declared that they would put an end to all pensions and sinecures. They had endeavoured to bring all former governments into disrepute, by denouncing their corruption and extravagance in these matters. They passed a resolution that £1,200 a year was the whole amount which the Queen could distribute among her subjects, to encourage literary attainments, improvements in art, and discoveries in science. And yet in spite of all their professions, he said they had really made a more corrupt use of the patronage of the Crown than any of the governments that preceded them. Another ground of complaint was the uncertainty attending all their measures. Among the alleged misdeeds of the Government, the honourable baronet referred to the introduction by Lord Melbourne to the Queen of Mr. Owen—"an individual of infamous notoriety, on account of the pernicious doctrines which he had been the means of disseminating among the people." He concluded by moving "that Her Majesty's Government, as at present constituted, does not possess the confidence of the House." The motion was seconded by Alderman Thompson.

Sir George Grey, while meeting the motion with a direct negative, most sincerely rejoiced that the Conservatives had at last mustered sufficient courage to abandon the course of policy they had pursued for the preceding five years; and, instead of waging a perpetual warfare of detail, had at last come boldly forward with a motion which brought under review the whole policy of the Government, legislative and administrative, and demanded of the representatives of the nation, aye or no, whether Ministers possessed their confidence. They had been charged with fomenting Chartism. But could it be maintained that the late insurrection in Wales was chargeable on the Government? Was there no ground for suspecting the real cause of complaint to be that, while Her Majesty, in the speech from the throne, had lamented the existence of insubordination, and while the House in their address to the Crown had unanimously expressed their concern at those events, the Government had not felt it necessary, as former governments had done, to propose to Parliament to increase the severity of the laws for repressing or punishing the insurgents? They had relied on the efficiency of the law as it stood, which had been strictly, but at the same time mercifully, enforced. The right honourable baronet adverted *seriatim* to all the topics on which the preceding speakers had addressed the House, and certainly made a very able and ingenious defence of the general policy of the administration. After explaining away the objections to Admiral Fleming's appointment as Governor of Greenwich Hospital, and to Sir John Newport's pension, he began to carry his attack into the quarters of the enemy, and commented in very severe terms on a speech delivered by Mr. Dawson, the brother-in-law of Sir Robert Peel, to his friends in the borough of Devonport.

After congratulating the House on the successful administration of affairs in Canada, Jamaica, and India, respectively, the hon. baronet returned again to the attack, and drew a contrast between the opinions of Lord Lyndhurst and Sir Robert Peel. The former had, in a speech at the end of the preceding session, declared that the Queen's Government could not be carried on so long as the representation of the country continued in its present form. Now Sir Robert Peel, and the party generally, seemed to pride themselves in a peculiar degree on their adherence to the Reform Bill. "Indeed," said Sir G. Grey, "one can hardly help smiling at their new-born zeal for reform, and at the warm profession of attachment to the Reform Act so frequently heard from the other side of the House. The attachment is, however, evidently to the defects of this act, to whatever it impedes its successful operation, and tends to deprive the people of some portion of the benefits which they anticipated from it. If any proposal is made for the improvement of that measure, or the removal of any faults in its machinery, hon. gentlemen opposite rise up in large numbers to declare their intention to maintain that act in its integrity. Here, however, is Lord Lyndhurst, one of the chief Conservative leaders, maintaining that the reform measure is the great impediment to the progress of legislation. The question, then, is, 'Are the opinions of Lord Lyndhurst, or those of the right hon. baronet, to prevail in the future Cabinet?' Sir George Grey next referred to the conduct of the Conservative party in the battle of the privileges, which their leader, Sir Robert Peel, had to fight single-handed on that side of the House. The course which he adopted was in his opinion essential, and which he had declared he would rather abdicate his seat than abandon. He was obliged to pursue it amidst the cold looks and averted regards, if not the open opposition, of those who professed to follow him as their leader. What chance, then, had he of forming a Government, with but a small fraction of the Conservative party agreeing with him in matters that he deemed essential?

Mr. Disraeli referred to several symptoms of the weakness of the Government, one of which was that they adopted strong measures; another, that they had abolished the constitutional guardians of the peace, to erect a new police force in their stead. A strong Government was enabled to carry its measures through the ardent co-operation of all classes in the realm, and was one to which the great body of the people looked up with confidence. That was not the case with this Government: they were not strong, but in one thing they were steady—that is, in their determination to keep their places.

Mr. Lytton spoke of Lord Normanby's government in Ireland in terms of the strongest censure; and he did not hesitate to charge Lord Ebrington's government with having encouraged the projects of the agitators. He read from the *Pilot* newspaper, Mr. O'Connell's organ, an extract from a speech delivered by that gentleman as a proof of this assertion, inasmuch as the speaker was not prosecuted by the Government:—"I have always

declared that not one drop of blood should be shed. I hate bloodshed and violence; but I now declare that I am ready to die in the field, rather than submit to Tory domination. Let others do as they may, I am determined not to submit, and I am certain I shall not stand alone, for I shall be supported by millions in that determination." At a meeting in the Theatre Royal, Dublin, the same speaker said, referring to the House of Lords:—"If one of those aristocrats had gone to a stock-broker, and told him that Tipperary was in commotion, that Galway was in arms, and that Kerry was up and led on by——" (here he was interrupted) "if that had been stated, and if the same authority were asked, In case it were attempted to put down these disturbances, and to hang the agitator, what would the national debt in this country be worth? what do you think would be the answer of the stock-broker?" On another occasion he bade them "send round to their million of men with their thousands of leaders, and let them know that their country was lost, if they did not arise to prevent their liberties being wrested from them by force and fraud. The peasant was ready to sacrifice himself, and he called upon them to stand between him and the knife of the oppressor."

The House was then addressed by Mr. Gally Knight, Mr. Pakington, and Lord Claude Hamilton; after which Lord Howick rose, and delivered a lengthened speech on the policy of the Government, which he had abandoned because nothing had been done by it to conciliate its most respectable and earnest supporters, who, year by year—almost month by month—were falling off from its ranks and joining those of its opponents.

Sir James Graham also delivered a telling speech against the Government, and he mentioned the following facts as illustrations of the means by which it maintained itself in power:—"No less than eight naval officers above the rank of lieutenant had stood contests at the last general election and had been defeated. Every one of those officers had since been placed in command. Admiral Ommaney, who had contested Hampshire, had since been placed in command of the Lisbon; Lord John Churchill, who had contested Woodstock, now commanded the Druid; Captain Plumbridge, the candidate for Falmouth, had been appointed to the *Astroæa*; and Lord Clarence Paget, the candidate for Southampton, to the *Howe*. Captain Napier, who stood for Greenwich, now commanded the *Powerful*; and Captain Townshend, who contested Tamworth, had been appointed to the *Tyne*." Sir James Graham then made some severe remarks upon the alleged political inconsistencies of some members of the Government, and among the rest he did not spare Mr. Macaulay.

That gentleman immediately rose to reply. It would be easy, he said, to answer the personalities of which he had been the object—to recriminate would be still easier; but if ever he was under the necessity of addressing the House on matters which concerned himself, he hoped it would not be on an occasion when the dearest interests of the country were staked on the issue of the debate. "He felt, indeed, with the most intense conviction, that in

pleading for the Government to which he belonged, he was pleading for the dearest interests of the commonwealth, for the reformation of abuses, and for the preservation of august and venerable institutions, and the general welfare of the people."

Mr. Macaulay then proceeded to deliver a magnificent defence of the Liberal party and their policy, which deserves to be ranked with the best of Burke's orations. Referring to the subjects that were open questions, Mr. Macaulay said, "Now, if on account of this difference of opinion, the House should consider them unworthy of its confidence, then no government for many years had been or was worthy of the confidence of the House of Commons, for the several governments of Mr. Pitt, of Mr. Fox, of Lord Liverpool, of Mr. Canning, and of the Duke of Wellington, all had open questions of the greatest moment. The question of parliamentary reform was an open question with the government of Mr. Pitt: Lord Granville was opposed to that question, yet he was brought into the cabinet by Mr. Pitt, who favoured it. Mr. Pitt was adverse to the slave-trade, while a defender of it, Mr. Dundas, was a member of his government. Mr. Fox in the same manner, in his cabinets of 1792 and 1806, had open questions of similar importance; and the governments of Lord Liverpool, Mr. Canning, and the Duke of Wellington left as an open question Catholic emancipation, which, closely connected as it was with the executive administration, ought, perhaps, to have been one of the last questions which should ever have been left open by any cabinet. If men," continued the right hon. gentleman, "were to be deemed disqualified for places in the councils of their Sovereign, because they exerted themselves to carry the Reform Bill, because they appealed to the people to support that bill, because they employed means certainly lying within the verge of the law, but as certainly also within the confines of prudence, then he contended no men in this empire were more completely disqualified for office than the noble lord and the right hon. baronet. He altogether denied the assertion which he had heard over and over again, that a government that countenanced, or did not discountenance, agitation would not punish rebellion. There might be some similarity in the simple act between the man who bled and the man who stabbed, but was there no difference in the nature of the action? He (Mr. Macaulay) did not believe there had been one instance of justifiable insurrection in this country for a century and a half. On the other hand, he held agitation to be essential, not only to the obtaining of good and just measures, but to the existence of a free government itself. If they chose to adopt the principle of Bishop Horsley, that the people have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them, then, indeed, they might deprecate agitation; but in a free country and under a free government, the deprecation was vain and untenable. In Russia, if a man can obtain an audience of the Emperor Nicholas or Count Nesselrode, and can produce proof that certain views he entertains are sound, certain plans he proposes

would be attended with practical benefit, then, indeed, without agitation, without public discussion, with a single stroke of the pen, a great and important change is at once effected. Not so in this country. Here the people must be appealed to—the public voice must be consulted. In saying this, he did not defend one party alone, he was defending alike both the great parties in the House. Had they not heard of agitation against the Catholic claims? Was there no agitation against the poor law? Had there been no agitation for or against the Catholic privy councillors? But to pass from questions about which a difference of opinion might fairly exist, to a measure upon which all must agree—a measure of the proudest, grandest nature that had ever received the sanction of the legislature—the abolition of the slave trade: that, he contended, never would have been carried without agitation.”

The right hon. gentleman concluded his speech as follows:—

“I believe that if, with the best and purest intentions, the right hon. baronet were to undertake the government of this country, he would find that it was very easy to lose the confidence of the party who raised him to power, but very difficult indeed to gain that which the present Government happily possessed—the confidence of the people of Ireland. It is upon these grounds, and principally upon the question of Ireland, that I should be inclined to rest the case of the present Ministry. Would to God that I were speaking to an audience that would judge this great controversy fairly, with an unbiassed mind, and as it will be judged by future ages. The passions which inflame us, the sophistries which delude us, will not last for ever. The paroxysms of faction have their appointed season; even the madness of fanaticism is but for a day: the time is coming when our conflicts will be to others as the conflicts of our forefathers are to us; when our priests who convulse the State, our politicians who make a stalking-horse of the Church, will be no more than the Harleys and Sacheverells of a bygone day; and when will be told, in language very different from that which now draws forth applause at Exeter Hall, the story of these troubled years. Then it will be said that there was a portion of the empire which presented a striking contrast to the rest: not that it was doomed to sterility, for the soil was fruitful and well-watered—not that it wanted facilities for commerce and trade, for its coasts abounded in havens marked by Nature to be the marts of the whole world—not that the people were too proud to improve these advantages, or too pusillanimous to defend them, for in endurance of toil and gallantry of spirit, they were conspicuous amongst the nations—but that the bounty of Nature was rendered unavailable by the tyranny of man. Whether the result of this debate will be victory or defeat, I know not; but I know that there are defeats not less glorious than even victory itself, and yet I have seen and shared in some glorious victories. Those were proud and happy days when, amidst the praises and blessings of millions, my noble friend Lord John Russell led us on in the great struggle for the

Reform Bill; when hundreds waited around our doors till sunrise to hear the tidings of our success; and when the great cities of the empire poured forth their populations on the highways to meet the mails that were bringing from the capital the tidings whether the battle of the people was lost or won. Those days were such as my noble friend cannot hope to see again. Two such triumphs would be too much for one life. But perhaps there still awaits him a less pleasing, a less exhilarating, but not a less honourable task—the task of contending against superior numbers through years of discomfiture to maintain those civil liberties, those rights of conscience which are inseparably associated with the name of his illustrious house. At his side will not be wanting men who, against all odds, and through all the turns of fortune, amidst evil days and evil tongues, will defend to the last with unabated spirit the noble principles of Milton and Locke. He may be driven from office; he may be doomed to a life of opposition; he may be made the mark for all the rancour of sects; he may be exposed to the fury of a Laud on the one side, and to the fanaticism of a ‘Praise-God-bare-bones’ on the other; but a portion of the praise which we bestow on the old martyrs and champions of freedom will not be refused by posterity to those who have in these our days endeavoured to bind together in real union sects and races too long hostile to each other, and to efface, by the mild influence of a parental government, the fearful traces which have been left by the misrule of ages.”

Lord Stanley delivered a most able and energetic speech against the Government. He was followed by Lord Morpeth, who repelled with equal ability his attack upon the government of Ireland. The noble lord concluded a most effective speech with the following appeal to the House:—“Those who have only perused what has taken place here during this debate must have perceived sufficient indications of a great difference of opinion amongst members of the Conservative party. Again and again they repeat that argument so often urged, that in the month of May last we declared we did not possess an adequate degree of the confidence of this House. That is true. And did we not hear, a few nights afterwards, the right hon. baronet (Sir Robert Peel) declare that if he undertook the government of the country, Ireland would be the chief source of his difficulties? And do you think that in the intervening period Ireland has been so soothed by the dulcet strains of sympathy and consolation which have been poured forth through all your organs, and from all your gatherings—do you think that the mind of Ireland has been so enlightened, so irradiated by the glimpses you have let fall upon her, of the sentiments you entertain towards her, and of the purposes you cherish in her behalf, that the difficulties to which the right hon. baronet alluded in so emphatic a manner are removed? that the dark cloud will pass away which before closed round his accession to office, and open an horizon of serenity and confidence where all was mistrust and alienation? Have there been no indications of late from England and Scotland, as well as from Ireland?

Why, since you gave notice of this motion, so big with menace and hostility, what has been the confirmation given by all the constituencies which had in the nick of time to be consulted? And the self-same verdict, so far as the vote of this night is concerned, has been returned from the most different bodies of men, and from the most distinct parts of the empire—from a great suburban district of the metropolis, from a first-rate seaport town, from the crowded manufactories of Birmingham, from the ducal borough of Newark, and in two consecutive instances from the enlightened capital of Scotland. We

word, to consult together for the public good—why, we, as a party, and in a selfish point of view, have only to bid you to go on: to stir up, or rather suffer to be stirred up, the fierce embers of past intolerance, to re-illumine the fires of expiring bigotry, and scatter the elements of mistrust amid the inhabitants of the same soil, the children of the same Creator. And, while you adopt this course, we, on the contrary, shall put our trust in the increasing spread of intelligence, in the confirmed sway of toleration, and in the returning sense of a disabused people.”



H. R. H. PRINCE ALBERT.

hail,” continued the noble lord, “with right good-will, from the different constituencies which have been consulted, their commentary on the motion of to-night. And if it pleases you so to continue it—if, heedless of the better part which is still open to you, you decline to co-operate in the work of assisting to smooth the difficulties and to lessen the obstacles which, we do not dream of denying, beset and impede many of the complicated relations of our internal, our foreign, and our colonial policy—to soothe the irritations that prevail in the public mind—to disarm jealousies—to allay dissensions—in one

Sir Robert Peel withheld his confidence from the Ministry on every ground on which confidence could be withholden; on the results of their public policy—on their own confessions of incompetency—on the testimony of their most valued friends—on account of the constitution of their Government—on account of their measures—and above all, on account of the principles they were now forced to avow, in order that they might retain their majority, and in consequence, their offices. In the first place, the right honourable baronet pointed out the diversity of opinion which prevailed in the

Cabinet on the subject of the ballot, the corn laws, and other great questions; he also took Mr. Macaulay to task for preaching, in his capacity as Cabinet Minister, the sacred duty of agitation. "But even supposing that you abstain from agitation," said Sir Robert Peel, "and that, to prevent collision in the Cabinet, you never discuss either the corn laws or the ballot, or any other of the open questions, what answer will you make to your constituents at Edinburgh? Out of office, you declared yourself in favour of these measures; in office, you repeated the assurance that you were faithful to your principles. Was it not the fact that from the proud keep of Windsor you proclaimed your fidelity to them, not for the gratification of any personal vanity, but from the firm resolution that truth should be spoken in high places, and that from the palace of kings the comfortable tidings of radical reform should be conveyed by a voice of authority?" This was an ironical allusion to a circumstance which was much commented on at the time of its occurrence. Mr. Macaulay, on his appointment to office, had issued an address to his constituents in Edinburgh, in which he declared his adherence to the opinions he had always held, especially that in favour of vote by ballot; and as he was at the time on a visit to the Queen, he dated his address from Windsor Castle. Sir Robert Peel concluded a powerful speech as follows:—"I cannot answer the question you put to me, what principles will prevail if a new government be formed? But I can answer for it that if the principles I profess do not prevail, of that government I shall form no part. It may be that by the avowal of my opinions I shall forfeit the confidence of some who, under mistaken impressions, may have been hitherto disposed to follow me. I shall deeply regret the withdrawal of that confidence; but I would infinitely prefer to incur the penalty of its withdrawal, than to retain it under false pretences, or under misapprehensions, which silence on my part might confirm; and, in that case, I shall not seek to compensate a threatened loss of confidence on this side the House by the faintest effort to conciliate the support of the other; but I shall steadily persevere in the course which I have uniformly pursued since the passing of the Reform Bill, content with the substantial power which I shall yet exercise—indifferent as to office, so far as personal feelings or personal objects are concerned; ready, if required, to undertake it, whatever its difficulties; refusing to accept it on conditions inconsistent with personal honour; disdaining to hold it by such a tenure as that by which it is at present held. Every stimulus to continued exertion will remain; every distinction that my ambition aspires to will be gained. I shall have the cordial co-operation of many friends whom I honour and esteem, and with whom I have acted from my first entrance into the troubled career of political life; and above all other encouragements, I shall have the proud satisfaction of acting in entire and cordial concert with that illustrious man on whose right hand I have stood throughout the varying fortunes of the great contests of recent years, who is still devoting his faculties, unimpaired by time, to the

service of a grateful country, and achieving a reputation as a statesman not inferior to his pre-eminent fame as a warrior, through the exercise of the same qualities, as rare in their separate excellence as wonderful in their combination, and which ensured his military triumphs—the same acuteness, the same sagacity, the same patience, the same true courage, the love of justice, the love of truth, the noble simplicity of mind without fear and without reproach. Encouraged by such an example, and supported by such aid, holding opinions which I believe to be the opinions of the vast majority of those intelligent and powerful classes which used to influence, and ought to influence, the constitution and the march of governments—the clergy, the magistracy, the commercial classes, the yeomanry of this country—I can hardly believe that such opinions are incapable of practical execution; but be that as it may, of this I am sure, that such opinions must so far prevail, that he who holds them will be enabled effectually to assist you (the Government), whenever you resolve to refuse improper and dangerous concessions; and if you are inclined yourself to make them, to offer those impediments to your downward progress which you may call obstructions to public business, but which the country will consider the real guarantee that this free and limited monarchy shall not be converted, through the folly or weakness of its rulers, into an unqualified and unmitigated democracy."

Lord John Russell wound up this great debate with a speech of much power, in which he defended himself from the various attacks that had been made upon him and the Government. He thus summed up the effects of their policy during the last four years:—"If there were so many of the interests of the empire which had not been neglected—if the affairs of Belgium had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion—if England had still an ally in the Queen of Spain—if the Basque Provinces had been pacified—if the Canadas at length assumed a prospect not only of returning tranquillity, but of permanent freedom and happiness, he did think that when the House was called upon to pronounce an opinion upon the general conduct of affairs, in giving that opinion the House ought not to leave out of view those many important interests upon which not a syllable had been uttered, nor forget that the Government had never betrayed its duty, or neglected to pursue the policy essential to the interests of the country. It had been said by the noble lord (Stanley) opposite that they were utterly inefficient as regards measures of legislation. Now, obstructed as they had been by a large party in the House of Commons, by a very decided majority in the House of Lords, he (Lord John) thought that during the four years which had elapsed since 1835, the legislative measures proposed and carried by Government were neither few nor unimportant. He maintained that there was scarcely a time to be found of equal duration in which measures of more importance had been carried. In 1835 was passed an act reforming altogether the municipal corporations of the country, placing them all upon a new foundation, admitting

popular control, and regulating all the affairs with the greatest minuteness. In another year there were important questions with regard to the Church. At that time there was one bishop, as in the case of the Bishop of Durham, with £22,000 a year, and another bishop with only £500 a year. The wants of the poorer bishops were then made up by deaneries, and other lucrative offices in the Church. There were likewise pluralities to the greatest extent. He remembered finding, in a catalogue of the benefices of the Church, that sixteen persons were holding sixty-five different species of ecclesiastical preferments. Measures were, in consequence, taken by the Government to prevent any clergyman from holding more than two pieces of preferment of any benefices more than two miles apart. He thought that act was one of the greatest importance that had been passed since the Revolution, perhaps since the Reformation. There were likewise acts introduced by the same administration for the registration of births and marriages, by which the Dissenters were allowed what they never had before—the privilege of being married according to their own forms. And he might add, also, another act passed for the introduction of a poor law into Ireland; and an act for the settlement of tithes in England, by which agriculture was promoted, and the clergy benefited to a great extent. It was upon these grounds, Lord John Russell contended, that the Opposition had not made out their case against Government. The House then divided—ayes, 287; noes, 308: majority for the Government, 21.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The Queen's Marriage—The Procession—The Ceremony—Reception of the Queen and Prince Albert at Windsor—Their Return to Buckingham Palace—Attempted Assassination of the Queen—Public Excitement caused by this Event—Arrest of the Assassin, Edward Oxford—Extraordinary Demonstrations of Loyalty—Trial of Oxford for High Treason—Proofs of the Prisoner's Insanity—The Jury found the Prisoner "Guilty, he being at the same time Insane."

THE Queen's marriage has been referred to in connection with the proceedings in Parliament. The details of that interesting event, and other incidents affecting Her Majesty's happiness which occurred during the year, will now be recorded. Although the Chapel Royal had been specially fitted up for the royal wedding, so as to afford as ample accommodation as possible, numbers who had even high claims to be present were unable to obtain admission.

The royal party assembled in the morning at Buckingham Palace, whence it had been arranged that the members of Her Majesty's family and those of Prince Albert's, accompanied by the officers of state, should proceed to St. James's Palace. The entire route along which the royal *cortège* was to pass was lined by the Horse Guards, while the trumpeters, in their state uniforms, were stationed at intervals, to announce the approach of the royal bride and bridegroom. First, the ladies and gentlemen of Her Majesty's household, in seven royal carriages, arrived at the garden entrance of St. James's Palace; and then followed the

splendid state coach containing Her Majesty, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, and the Mistress of the Robes. The closet behind the throne room had been draped with silk, and prepared for the reception of the Queen. There Her Majesty, attended by her maids of honour, train-bearers, and bridesmaids, remained until the Lord Chamberlain of her household marshalled the procession to the Chapel Royal. Soon after Her Majesty had entered the closet, the clash of "presented arms," the roll of drums and flourish of trumpets outside, told that the bridegroom had arrived. Before His Royal Highness walked his gentlemen of honour, two heralds, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Vice-Chamberlain of Her Majesty's household, &c., and he was supported on either side by the Duke and the Hereditary Prince of Saxe Coburg and Gotha. Loud and enthusiastic applause and waving of handkerchiefs greeted the bridegroom and his supporters along the route. He wore the uniform of an English field-marshal, and the insignia of the Order of the Garter, the collar of the order being fastened on either shoulder with a rosette of white ribbon; in his hand he carried the sacred volume, bound in green velvet, and clasped with gold.

When the bridegroom ascended the altar steps, every eye was fixed upon him; and there the noble bearing and calm thoughtful face won for Prince Albert the first expression of a courtly admiration, which has since ripened into a nation's love. There was a moment of expectation while the Prince, standing at the rails, awaited the coming of the royal bride; but soon the flourish of trumpets on the grand staircase gave notice of Her Majesty's approach, and every head was turned towards the entrance. The royal household walked first, then the members of the royal family, and next before the bride Lord Viscount Melbourne, bearing the great sword of state in its rich velvet scabbard. Her Majesty's dress was of white satin, trimmed with orange blossoms; her wreath was composed of the same kind of flowers, and covered with a veil of rich Honiton lace; she also wore the ribbon, collar, and star of the Order of the Garter, and her splendid train was borne by twelve unmarried ladies, selected from the flower of the English nobility. Slowly, amid the flourish of trumpets, the bridal procession passed towards the chancel, and then the Queen and her royal bridegroom stood side by side before the altar. The Archbishop of Canterbury performed the ceremony—his Grace's pure white lawn and black rochet contrasting well with all the gorgeous uniforms and bejewelled dresses that thronged outside the rails. As the service was proceeded with, the stillness of the distinguished company present became every instant more intense, till, at last, not even the rustle of a lady's dress, or the clink of an officer's spur, broke the silence, as the clear, musical voice, for which Her Majesty has ever been remarkable, was heard in the remotest corner of the chapel, promising, in tones of thrilling pathos, "to love, cherish, and to obey till death us do part."

At a quarter to one o'clock the ring was placed upon Her Majesty's finger; outside, the guns thundered forth

the intelligence; but their loud booming was nearly drowned by the long-continued shouts of acclamation which arose from the thousands who thronged the park. At the conclusion of the service the Queen Dowager cordially embraced and kissed the bride, and the Prince acknowledged Queen Adelaide's congratulations by kissing her hand. The bride and her royal consort drove at once to Buckingham Palace, and the noble assembly, who had witnessed the ceremony, retired. After a splendid *déjeuner* at Buckingham Palace, the bride and bridegroom took their departure for Windsor Castle. The sun shone out in cloudless lustre just at the moment of their leaving the gateway; the vast concourse of people assembled outside the palace hailed this as a happy omen, and as the carriage containing the royal pair drove off, the air was rent with the most enthusiastic cheering.

At Windsor everything that ingenuity could devise had been done to give expression to the loyal feelings of the inhabitants—every house was decorated from roof to ground-floor with evergreens and flags, and all the windows blazed with illuminations. Her Majesty and the Prince, as they drove through the dense masses that thronged the streets leading to the castle, repeatedly acknowledged the enthusiastic demonstrations of goodwill and loyalty with which they were received.

Throughout the entire country the day was kept as a festival. The inhabitants of cities and towns lighted up their windows, and in the country tar-barrels and bonfires blazed from every hill. In London the chief nobility, the leaders of political parties in both Houses, and the great Government officials, gave State banquets to celebrate the auspicious event, and in many a humble home throughout the land the people drank heartily "to the happiness of the royal pair."

The Queen and Prince Albert remained at Windsor Castle until the 14th, riding out in the park in the daytime, and entertaining a small circle at dinner. On Friday they returned quietly to Buckingham Palace.

About four months passed happily away, when another event occurred which was very near furnishing a startling illustration of the truth that there is no certain tenure of human happiness, and that the highest earthly felicity may be in a moment destroyed by an occurrence over which even royalty can have no control. On the night of Wednesday, the 10th of June, London was agitated by a report of an attempt upon the life of the Queen. A great variety of rumours, many of them contradictory, were quickly circulated in conversation, and in late editions of the evening papers. Next day an investigation took place at the Home Office, from which the public and the reporters of the daily press were excluded. The following are the facts as they were recorded in the "Annual Register:"—"At a quarter past six on Wednesday evening, the Queen, accompanied by Prince Albert, left Buckingham Palace, in a very low, open phaeton, drawn by four bays, to take their customary drive in Hyde Park before dinner, Colonel Buckley and Sir Edward Bowater attending as equerries. Had the Queen sat upon the right of the

Prince, as she usually did, she would have been next to the open railing of the Green Park passing up Constitution Hill; but she had on that occasion taken her place on the left, next to the long brick wall. The carriage had proceeded a short distance up the road, when a young man, who had been standing with his back to the Green Park fence, advanced to within a few yards of the carriage, and deliberately fired at the Queen. The shot, happily, did not take effect. The postilions paused for an instant. The Prince ordered them, in a loud voice, to drive on. "I have got another!" exclaimed the assassin, who discharged a second pistol, aimed at the carriage, which also proved harmless. The Queen and the Prince went as far as Hyde Park Corner, and then turned to the Duchess of Kent's mansion, in Belgrave Square. Meanwhile, the assassin remained near the spot, leaning against the park fence, with the weapons in his hand. Several persons laid hold of him, and he was conveyed by two policemen to the Gardener's Lane station-house. After staying a short time with the Duchess of Kent, in Belgrave Square, the Queen and her husband proceeded to Hyde Park, where an immense concourse of persons, of all ranks and both sexes, had congregated. The reception of the royal pair was so enthusiastic as almost to overpower the self-possession of the Queen, while Prince Albert's countenance, alternately pale and crimson, betrayed the strength of his emotions. They soon returned to Buckingham Palace, attended by a vast number of the nobility and gentry, in carriages and on horseback. A multitude of persons collected at the entrance to the palace, and vehemently cheered the Queen, who, though pale and agitated, repeatedly bowed and smiled in return. It is said that on reaching her apartments the Queen found relief in a flood of tears, but she recovered herself so as to appear as usual at the dinner-table. Persons of distinction flocked to the palace to make inquiries, and to all the gratifying assurance was given that no bad consequences to the Queen's health were likely to ensue from the shock.

The prisoner's name was Edward Oxford. He was about eighteen years of age, and of an unprepossessing countenance. He was a native of Birmingham, which town he had left nine years before. He was last employed at a public-house, "The Hog in the Pond," Oxford Street, corner of South Molton Street. He had bought a pair of pistols at a shooting gallery, where he had for some time practised firing. The prisoner was removed to the Home Office for examination on Thursday. The place was literally besieged with ladies and gentlemen wishing to be allowed to state what they saw. The examination was conducted by Lord Normanby, the Home Secretary, Mr. Fox Maule, Under Secretary, Mr. Mark Philips, and Mr. Hall, of Bow Street; the Attorney-General, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Comptroller of the Household being also present. The result was the prisoner's committal to Newgate for high treason. The police spent hours in searching for a bullet, but could find none.

The loyal excitement consequent upon this occurrence

was unbounded. The following day, when the Queen and the Prince took their drive in the park, the crowd was immense, and the cheering most enthusiastic. Hundreds of ladies and gentlemen on horseback accompanied them, like a body-guard, while the line of carriages calling at Buckingham Palace extended a considerable way down the Mall. On the 12th, the calls of the nobility and gentry—in carriages, on horseback, and on foot—were incessant. Thousands of people assembled before the palace. About twelve o'clock the sheriffs of London, and other civic functionaries, arrived, in four carriages, to ascertain when it would be Her Majesty's pleasure to receive the addresses of the Common Council. The Cabinet Ministers, and the chief officers of the household, arrived in quick succession through the south gate. At two o'clock the state carriage of the Speaker of the House of Commons entered the court, followed by 109 carriages, filled with members of the House of Commons. Never before, it is said, was the Speaker followed by so numerous a *cortège* on the occasion of presenting an address. As soon as the carriages of the Commons had left the court, the procession of the Lords began to enter; the barons first, and then the other peers, rising in rank to the royal Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge, the Lord Chancellor bringing up the rear. There were eighty-one carriages in the peers' procession, which was brilliant and imposing in an extraordinary degree. Many of the lords wore splendid uniforms, and decorations of various orders; the Duke of Wellington especially. The procession of the Commons passed with little notice from the crowd; but on the Duke's appearance the cheering was enthusiastic and universal; the Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge were also cheered. Whilst the lords were alighting from their carriages, the grand terrace in front of the palace was crowded with distinguished persons in brilliant costumes. The Queen received the address on the throne. The Lord Chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons advanced side by side. The Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge walked in a line with the Lord Chancellor, the peers and Commons following. Prince Albert stood on the left of the throne, the great officers of state and of the household on the right. The Lord Chancellor read the address, which was graciously received by Her Majesty.

The trial of Edward Oxford for high treason was commenced in the Central Criminal Court on Thursday, July 9th, and ended on the following day. The judges were Lord Denman, Baron Alderson, and Justice Patteson. The counsel for the Crown were the Attorney and Solicitor-General, Sir F. Pollock, and Mr. Wightman; for the prisoner, Mr. Sidney Taylor and Mr. Bodkin. The indictment having been read, the prisoner, on the usual question, "Guilty or not guilty?" being put, answered, "Not guilty." The Attorney-General stated the case for the prosecution. He expressed his satisfaction that the gentlemen placed in the jury-box possessed the entire confidence of both parties, indicated by the fact that no challenge had been given. He explained that the trial would be conducted in the manner prescribed

by an Act passed in the fortieth year of King George III.'s reign; which provided that where the overt act of treason was a direct attack upon the life of the Sovereign, the trial should be conducted as common trials for murder. This act only gave the life of the Sovereign the protection enjoyed by the meanest of his subjects, and did away with the necessity of two witnesses to the overt act, and other forms very proper to be observed in cases of a political character. He understood from the affidavit on which the motion for the postponement of the trial had been granted, that a plea of insanity would be raised. Two questions would then arise—first, whether supposing the prisoner to be accountable for his actions, he was guilty of the offence laid to his charge; and secondly, whether, at the time he committed the act, he was accountable to the law for his actions. The burden of proof in the first case rested entirely with the prosecutor; for the prisoner was presumed to be perfectly innocent until his guilt was established by clear and unquestionable testimony. And unless the jury disbelieved the witnesses he should call, it would be impossible to come to any other conclusion than that the prisoner was guilty. The Attorney-General then proceeded to state some of the circumstances of Oxford's life up to the time of the alleged treason. The prisoner, the jury would perceive, was a very young man, about eighteen or nineteen years of age, though, from his appearance, it would hardly be supposed that he had reached that age. It would appear that he was born, as he understood, at Birmingham, but came when very young to London. He went to school in Lambeth, and had since been in the service of several publicans in the capacity of barman. It would appear that he had deliberately formed a plan to make an attempt upon the life of the Sovereign. On the 4th of May in this present year, when he was living at his lodging, he bought a pair of pistols from a person of the name of Hayes, living in Blackfriars Road, for the sum of £2; at the same time he also bought a powder-flask. It would also appear in evidence that he practised shooting at a shooting gallery in Leicester Square, at another in the Strand, and at another at the west end of the town. On Wednesday, the 3rd of June, just one week before the day named in the indictment, he went to a shop kept by a person of the name of Gray, with whom the prisoner had formerly been a schoolfellow, and who resides in Bridge Road, Lambeth, and there he bought half a hundred copper caps to use in firing pistols. He asked Gray at the same time where he could buy some bullets. He was told where bullets were to be had, and he said himself that he had some gunpowder. On the evening of Tuesday, the 9th of June, he was seen with a pistol which he himself stated to be loaded; and when he was asked what he meant to do with it, he refused to tell, but said he had been firing at a target. The Attorney-General then came to Wednesday, the 10th of June, and gave a recital of the incidents connected with the attempt on Her Majesty's life, adding that when the second shot was fired, a man named Lowe immediately rushed across, seized Oxford, and took his pistol from

him. This man was, for the moment, believed to be the offender by another individual, who cried, "Why, you confounded rascal, how dare you shoot at our Queen?" Upon which the prisoner said, "It was I who shot at her." Proofs were given that he had purchased balls, and some witnesses declared that they heard them whizzing past. On his examination before the Privy Council, Oxford had voluntarily made the following singular statement: "A great many witnesses against me. Some say that I shot with my left, others with my right hand. They vary as to the distance. After I fired the first pistol, Prince Albert got up as if he would jump out of the carriage, and sat down again, as if he thought better of it. This is all I shall say at present."

A bullet-mould, powder-flask, and other articles were found at Oxford's lodgings, also rules and regulations of a supposed secret society. The defence set up was a plea of insanity, and Mr. Taylor, his counsel, referring to the statement that Oxford belonged to such a society, said it had been clearly proved that no such society was in existence. He was quite sure that if there were, it would be dragged to light by the police. All the papers produced had been written by the prisoner himself, and were the creations of his own foolish fancy. He asked the jury if they considered that if, with all the boundless wealth and influence of the Government to procure evidence and information, they failed to produce evidence of a treasonable nature, had he not a right to say that no such evidence could be obtained, and that the prisoner at the bar was labouring under a mental delusion? He went in the most public manner to commit the outrage, taking no precautions for his escape, not even standing inside of the railing. He avowed the deed, stood firm, and surrendered himself up at once to await the consequences. Could any sane man have so acted?

Witnesses for the defence deposed that madness was hereditary in the family. His grandfather had been raging mad; his father had often threatened to commit suicide, and on one occasion threw a bundle of bank notes into the fire, and watched them till they were consumed. The prisoner's mother stated that her husband was a gold-chaser by trade, and could earn twenty guineas a week. He bought a horse on one occasion, and used to lead it about the parlour. He hit his wife with a quart pot on the head, and when she was in distress for money, he used to laugh. On one occasion he sold off all the furniture of his house, and went to Dublin to spend the money. The prisoner, her son, was always subject to fits of crying and of passion. He was fond of handling fire-arms. On several occasions he presented a pistol at his mother, and on one occasion he struck her a blow across the face.

Dr. John Conolly, physician to the Hanwell Lunatic Asylum, who had 800 patients under his care, deposed that he had conversed with the prisoner, and considered him of unsound mind. Dr. Chowne, physician to the Charing Cross Hospital, and Surgeon Clarke, gave similar testimony. The Solicitor-General, in reply, dissected the evidence for the prisoner's insanity, contrasting it

with the facts which indicated a clear intellect and remarkable self-possession.

The Chief Justice Denman then charged the jury. He cautioned them against the dangerous doctrine that the commission of a great crime without an apparent motive was in itself a proof of insanity. With regard to the motive, a love of notoriety had been suggested; but might not this absurd sort of love of notoriety have been as well gratified by firing pistols unloaded as loaded?

The jury, having been absent from the court about three quarters of an hour, returned the following special verdict:—"We find the prisoner, Edward Oxford, guilty of discharging the contents of two pistols, but whether or not they were loaded with ball has not been satisfactorily proved to us, he being of unsound mind at the time." An argument followed between counsel as to whether this verdict amounted to an absolute acquittal, or an acquittal on the ground of insanity. Lord Denman said that the jury were in a mistake. It was necessary that they should form an opinion as to whether the pistols were loaded with bullets or not; but it appeared they had not applied their minds to that point, and therefore it would be necessary that they should again retire, and say aye or no. Did the prisoner fire a pistol loaded with ball at the Queen? After considerable discussion upon the point, the jury again retired to consider their verdict. During their absence the question was again argued, and it appeared to be the opinion of the judges that the jury were bound to return a verdict of "guilty" or "not guilty" upon the evidence brought before them. After an absence of an hour they returned into court, finding the prisoner "guilty, he being at the same time insane." The sentence was that he should be imprisoned during Her Majesty's pleasure, according to the Act, 40 George III., providing for cases where crimes were committed by insane persons.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Rupture with China—Our Commercial Relations with that Country—Opening of the Trade—The Opium Trade—Smuggling—Commissioner Lin—Destruction of Opium—Trade with England absolutely forbidden—Blockade of Canton—Seizure of Chusan—Sir James Graham's Resolutions on our Commercial Relations with China—Importance of our Trade with China—Vast Resources of the Chinese Empire—Chinese Jealousy of England—The Miseries of a Chinese War—Charges against the Government for their Conduct in relation to China—Answered by Mr. Macaulay—The Old System of Commercial Intercourse—Outrageous Proceedings of Commissioner Lin—Defence of the War by Sir G. Staunton—Mr. Gladstone's Denunciation of the Opium Trade—Chinese Atrocities—Poisoning the Wells—Speech of Sir Robert Peel—Neglect of the Government—Lord Palmerston's Defence of the Government—Hostilities at Canton—Blockade of the English Factories—Attack on the Black Joke Schooner—Submission of the British Commissioner—Naval Engagement between the Chinese and the English—Poisoned Tea—Rewards for the Heads of the English—Attempt to burn the British Shipping—Capture of the City of Ting-hae-heen.

THE exclusive right of the East India Company to trade with China ceased on the 22nd of April, 1834, and from this time dates the great dispute about the opium traffic. The first free trade ship sailed from England on the 25th of the same month. Lord Napier was sent out to China to superintend British commerce, and arrived at

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Macao on the 15th of July. He died soon after his arrival, and was succeeded by Mr., afterwards Sir John Davis. But the Chinese were not disposed to recognise the authority with which he was vested. The only chief whom they expected was a commercial head man, qualified to communicate with their officers by petition, and through the established medium of the Hong merchants. The new mode of conducting British commerce which had been announced to them was regarded as a trifling matter, affecting only the outside foreigners. As long as these should be humbly obedient to orders, and respectfully acknowledge the Emperor's kindness, they cared very little whom they might have for their chief, or what powers he should possess over his countrymen. Lord Napier announced his arrival by letter to the viceroy; but every effort which he made to obtain the recognition of his authority, and to establish a direct official connection with the Chinese rulers at Canton, completely failed. During 1835 and 1836 matters went on peaceably under the superintendence of the second and third Commissioners, Mr. Davis and Sir T. Robinson, the former of whom returned to England, and the latter was superseded by Captain Elliot, R.N., who in vain renewed the attempt to establish an official connection with the Chinese authorities. The opening of the trade in 1834 gave a powerful stimulus to all kinds of smuggling, and especially in opium, the importation of which into China was prohibited by the Imperial Government, in consequence of its deleterious qualities. During the following years, however, the supply of that drug was increased enormously, and the smuggling trade was carried on along the coasts of the northern provinces, in defiance of the laws of the country. The Imperial Government was naturally indignant at these encroachments, and became, moreover, seriously alarmed, perhaps not so much for its demoralising effects, as for the continued drain of specie which it occasioned. In March, 1839, Lin arrived at Canton, as Imperial High Commissioner, to enforce the laws in this matter. He immediately issued an edict requiring that every chest of opium on the river should be delivered up, in order to be destroyed; and that bonds should be given by traders that their ships should never again bring any opium, on pain of forfeiture of the article and death to the importer. Lin having taken strong measures to carry this edict into effect, Captain Elliot proceeded to Canton, and issued a circular letter to his countrymen, requiring them to surrender into his hands all the opium then actually on the coast of China, and holding himself responsible for all the consequences. On the 21st of May the whole of the opium, to the amount of 20,283 chests, was given up to the Chinese Government, and immediately destroyed. But even this great sacrifice did not propitiate Commissioner Lin. On the 26th of November he issued another interdiction, ordering the cessation of all trade with British ships in a week; and in January, 1840, an Imperial edict appeared directing that all trade with England should cease for ever. In consequence of these proceedings, an armament was sent forth to teach the Chinese the principles

of international law, which they had never recognised, perhaps never heard of, as they regarded all other nations in the light of barbarians, and therefore utterly unworthy of notice. The first part of the armament reached the Canton river in June, 1840, under the command of Captain Elliot. Having established a rigorous blockade in the river, the English, on the 5th of July, took possession of the large island of Chusan, in the Eastern Sea. Proceeding still further to the mouth of the Peiho, in the Yellow Sea, Captain Elliot had a conference with the Imperial minister, Ke-Shen, which resulted in a truce. Ke-Shen was appointed Imperial Commissioner to proceed to Canton, for the purpose of investigating the grounds of complaint, and bringing about an adjustment of differences.

It was under these circumstances that Sir James Graham, on the 7th of April, brought forward a series of resolutions on our relations with China. He remarked, in his speech introducing the subject, that he was guilty of no exaggeration when he stated that one-sixth of the whole united revenue of Great Britain and India depended upon our commercial relations with China. During the previous year the revenue paid into the exchequer of this country on account of tea amounted to no less a sum than £3,660,000. Besides that, there were other receipts arising from duties on imports into that country, making the British revenue from our intercourse with China no less than £4,200,000. India also derived a large portion of its revenue from China, which he estimated at no less than £2,000,000 annually. There had been an annual influx from that country into India of specie, averaging £1,300,000. "People," he said, "formed a very inadequate notion of the importance of China, because it was formed from our intercourse with Canton alone, which was very much as if a foreigner who was occasionally permitted to anchor at the Nore, at times to land at Wapping, being placed in close confinement during his continuance there, were under such circumstances to pronounce a deliberate opinion on the resources, genius, and character of the British Empire." Sir James then gave the following sketch of the Chinese empire:—"It was inhabited by 350,000,000 of human beings, all directed by the will of one man—all speaking one language—all governed by one code of laws—all professing one religion—all actuated by the same feelings of national pride and prejudice; tracing back their history by centuries, transmitted to them in regular succession, under a patriarchal government, without interruption, and boasting of their education, of their printing, of their civilisation, of their arts—all the conveniences and many of the luxuries of life existing there when Europe was still sunk in barbarism, and when the light of knowledge was obscure in this western hemisphere. But apart from their numbers—apart from what he had mentioned with respect to that unity, which was strength, he called the attention of the House to their immense wealth. They possessed an annual revenue of £60,000,000, regularly collected. They had no debt; they inhabited the largest and the fairest portion of Asia. More than one-third of that country

they cultivated, under the finest climate, with unwearied industry. The soil is most fertile, watered by vast rivers, and intersected by a canal 1,200 miles in length, one of the standing wonders of the world. And in every portion of that immense empire there is one uniformity of system, one jealous suspicion of strangers, evinced both on the shores of the Yellow Sea and all along on the confines of Ava, Nepal, and Bokhara."

The Chinese were intensely jealous of all foreigners, but more especially the English, and not without some reason, for if they looked across the Himalaya Mountains they saw Hindostan prostrate at the feet of England, and they were not so ignorant as not to be aware of the policy that had led to that result; for scarcely a century had elapsed since the British empire in India took its rise from a single factory surrounded by a wall, to which we first added a ditch, then formed a little garrison by arming our labourers, then began to treat with native powers, and having discovered their weakness, seized on Arcot, triumphed at Plassy, and so on, till a series of successes terminated in the battle of Assaye, when India became ours, and Central Asia trembled at our presence. With such a lesson before their eyes, it was natural that the Chinese should be jealous of British encroachments. Sir James Graham having given a history of the various occurrences that led to the misunderstanding and mutual irritation between our representatives at Canton and the Chinese authorities, proceeded to deprecate a war with China, and to point out its evils and its cost. He believed it would be no little war, nor one that could be terminated in a single campaign. It was one that would be attended with circumstances no less formidable than the magnitude of the interests at stake. It would be carried on at the remotest part of the habitable globe, where the monsoons would interfere with the communications that must be had with this country—at an immense distance from all our naval stations. Sir James then proceeded:—"When they saw, on the part of Her Majesty's advisers, the most pertinacious adherence to the erroneous course repudiated both by experience and reason—when they saw that they attempted to force on a proud and powerful people a mode of proceeding to which the weakest would not tamely submit—when they saw that the advice of one of the greatest and most prudent of our statesmen, who himself had warned them, was disregarded and rejected—when they saw repeated warnings given by the servants of the same administration equally unattended to—when they saw the branch of trade which the confidential servants of the administration had declared to be piratical, not put down by the interference of Her Majesty's Government—when they saw nothing done, or attempted to be done, while Her Majesty's superintendent was left without power, without instructions, and without force to meet the emergency which must have been naturally expected to follow, he could not help asking the House whether they did believe that the people of this country would patiently submit to the burden which this Parliament must of necessity impose? and whether that people

could repose confidence in an administration that by a mismanagement of five years had destroyed a trade which had flourished for centuries, and which, in addition to the loss which the country had already undergone, had almost plunged it into a war in which success would not be attended with glory, and in which defeat would be our ruin and our shame?" The right hon. baronet concluded with moving that "it appears to the House, on consideration of the papers relating to China presented to this House by command of Her Majesty, that the interruption in our commercial and friendly intercourse with that country, and the hostilities which have since taken place, are mainly to be attributed to the want of foresight and precaution on the part of Her Majesty's present advisers in respect to our relations with China, and especially to their neglect to furnish the superintendent at Canton with powers and instructions calculated to provide against the growing evils connected with the contraband traffic in opium, and adapted to the novel and difficult situation in which the superintendent was placed."

Mr. Macaulay defended the policy of the Government. The omissions on their part complained of, he said, were four in number:—First, that they omitted to correct a point in the order in council, which directed the superintendent to reside in Canton; secondly, that they had omitted to correct the order in council on the point which showed the superintendent a new channel of communication with the Chinese Government; thirdly, that they had omitted to act upon the suggestion of the memorandum of the Duke of Wellington, to keep a naval force in the neighbourhood of Canton; and fourthly, what was most important of all, that they did not give sufficient power to the superintendent to put down the illicit trade. With regard to the first, the answer was, that no dispute as to the residence of the superintendent had anything to do with the unfortunate rupture, as that dispute was perfectly accommodated for two years before the rupture, the point having been fully conceded in the most formal and honourable manner by the Chinese authorities. As to the second, the answer was, that the Chinese Government had fully conceded that point also. Negotiations had taken place between Captain Elliot and the Chinese authorities, and the dispute was, in fact, at an end. The third charge was, that the Government had not provided a vessel of war to be stationed on the Chinese coast. What was the recommendation of the Duke of Wellington in reference to this very subject? It was, that a vessel of war should be off Canton ready to act, until the trade of the British merchants should return to its proper channel. He was confident that nothing was contained in the Duke of Wellington's prior despatches which could be taken to exhibit any desire on his part that there should be a naval force constantly upon the Canton station, to await any calamitous event which might take place. The fourth point was, that the English Government, having legal authority to do so, had omitted to send to the superintendent at Canton proper power, for the purpose of suppressing the illicit

trade which they knew was carried on there. The right hon. gentleman then argued at considerable length that there had been every reason to expect that the Chinese Government would legalise the traffic of opium; and that, therefore, it would have been premature and inexpedient to send out instructions to the superintendent, authorising him to seize and send home any British subjects who should have been found carrying on that trade. He insisted, also, on the impracticability of giving effect to any prohibition of the illicit traffic, except by the exertions of the Chinese themselves; and asserted his belief that the positive prohibition of the opium trade by Captain Elliot, unsupported by physical force, would have been inadequate to put the trade down. As to whether it were wise or not on the part of the Chinese Government to prohibit the importation of opium, there might be a doubt, and on that point the governor of China alone was competent to decide; but when they resorted to measures unjust and unlawful, confined our innocent countrymen, and insulted the Sovereign in the person of her representative, then he thought the time had arrived when it was fit that we should interfere. With respect to the present motion, whatever its results might be, he could not believe that the House would agree to a vote of censure so gross, so palpable, or so unjust as that which was conveyed in its terms; and he trusted that even if there should be a change of men consequent upon the conclusion of the debate, there would, at all events, be no change of measures.

Sir William Follett, in replying to Mr. Macaulay, gave the following account of the mode in which supercargoes under the East India Company acted in the Chinese waters. The company took from their own ships and officers a bond that they would obey the orders of those supercargoes. No ship could trade to China at all without having a licence from the East India Company, which was forfeited in case of disobedience; in which case the ship was liable to be sold, and the crew might be arrested by the supercargoes, sent as a proviso to England, tried, convicted, fined, and imprisoned for that offence. The supercargoes, therefore, had complete and positive control over the ships and commerce.

Sir George Staunton considered, though very reluctantly, that this war was absolutely just and necessary under existing circumstances. With respect to the immorality or impolicy of the opium trade, he yielded to no member of the House in his anxiety to put it down altogether. But the question between us and the Chinese Government with regard to the opium trade was not a question of morality or policy, but a question whether there had been any breach of international rights or international law. Now, from the earliest period, foreigners had not been permitted directly to come before the Chinese tribunals, but through the medium of the Hong merchants. The remedy was first against their sureties, then against the property of the party. Up to the arrival of Commissioner Lin there was no other law. The remedy against the property of the person extended to the confiscation of all found within

the river of Canton, but there was no law which reached property out of that river. When the imperial Commissioner Lin arrived in that city, he brought with him a law of a very extraordinary character, denouncing death against any foreigner who traded in opium, accompanied by the confiscation of his property to the Crown. However that might be justified, Sir George Staunton maintained that the attempt to punish those under the new law, who had arrived in China under the old law, was "a most atrocious injustice. Such an act, without looking at all to any subsequent events, was a full justification of the measures that had been taken to exact reparation. Our empire in the East was founded on the force of opinion; and if we submitted to the degrading insults of China, the time would not be far distant when our political ascendancy in India would be at an end. If ever the opium trade was put down, it would be by the co-operation of the Chinese Government with our own. That co-operation could be maintained only by a treaty, which he hoped would be established." Sir George Staunton considered it in the highest degree unjust to visit upon Her Majesty's present Ministers the consequences of a system which had received the approval of the House and of the country, and even of Sir James Graham himself. He was bound to say that he could not at all connect the unhappy state of things in China with the orders issued by Lord Palmerston. They were to be attributed wholly to the extraordinary conduct of Commissioner Lin. Captain Elliot, too, had exhibited great gallantry, and what appeared to be vacillating policy on his part was only extreme anxiety to meet the various exigencies of the case.

A number of other speakers having addressed the House, Mr. Gladstone rose and threw additional light upon the causes of the rupture. He said that after Captain Elliot had prohibited the British shipping from going up to Whampoa, and had stated that he would establish himself with the English merchants at Canton, this was regarded as a claim on the part of the British merchants to go to the very focus of smuggling; and this afforded a suspicion, a seemingly well-founded suspicion, to the Chinese that it was their intention that the opium trade should be resumed there. The Chinese had no armament really wherewith to expel us from Canton. They therefore said, "We will resort to another mode of bringing you to reason: we will expel you from our shores by refusing you provisions;" and then, of course, they poisoned the wells. Here the speaker was interrupted by Ministerial cheers. He continued: "I am ready to meet those cheers. I understand what they mean. I have not asserted, I do not mean to assert, that the Chinese have actually poisoned their wells. All I mean to say is, that it was alleged that they had done so. They gave you notice to abandon your contraband trade. When they found that you would not, they had a right to drive you from their coasts, on account of your obstinacy in persisting in this infamous and atrocious traffic."

Sir S. Lushington reprobated those sentiments of Mr.

Gladstone, whom he admired as the powerful champion of every cause he thought right. But he asked upon what principle could the seizure of men who were living in Canton under the sanction of the country's usages be justified? Not only were 200 persons maligned without any proof or trial, but they were seized, incarcerated, and then, under the greatest duress, and under threats of being suffered to die of starvation, they had their property extorted from them; while the feelings of their countrymen had been also practised upon, to coerce them into the surrender of property in order to save the lives of the prisoners. That was an act of atrocity which no usages, no custom, no respect of popular prejudices in China ever would or ought to allow England to endure, much less to sanction. "It was," he said, "a grievous sin, a wicked offence, an atrocious violation of justice, for which England had the right, a strict, undeniable right, to demand reparation by force if refused peaceable applications. What followed? Expulsion. What next? Why, that very practice which, from all history—from the earliest days in which it was ever attempted, from the days when it was practised in Egypt, now probably 2,500 years ago, even during the time of open war, and even at periods when it might be said almost to be done in self-defence—has met with the unequivocal reprobation of the world: the practice, not of cutting off the supply, but of poisoning that source of life, by which not the enemy alone, but innocent women and helpless children were indiscriminately exterminated; and yet, to my everlasting wonder and astonishment, there fell from the hon. member for Newark another ever memorable expression. The hon. member said that the English were ordered to quit; they did not obey; they were deprived of provisions, and, 'of course,' continued the hon. member, 'the water was poisoned.' Those were the very words: I heard them at the time; they are so reported, and they are true. I might go on, but there is already ample justification for the course that the Government has taken; and when I consider all the causes which have led to the rupture, the position is quite clear that England is, by every principle of justice and of right, entitled, and she has authority by the law of God and of man, to demand redress; but, be it understood, not for a war of 'blood or reprisals.'"

Sir Robert Peel remarked that the charge against the Government was not that it had not sufficient foresight to know what the Emperor of China was going to do, but that, after the termination of the relation between China and the East India Company, which had continued for 200 years, and after an immense change in the position of this country with respect to China, Her Majesty's Government sent a gentleman to China to represent the Crown of this country, without the powers which they might have given him, which it was their duty to have given him, without instructions which he was competent to receive, and without the moral influence of a naval force, the advantage of which was demonstrated by the papers before the House. The Government ought to have supplied Captain Elliot with proper powers. It should have said what regulations were to be esta-

blished, what offences were to be breaches of those regulations, and then have constituted a court of admiralty and criminal jurisdiction, as they might have done. They have given their representative what was worse than no power—the semblance without the reality. They not merely withheld instructions, they gave him contradictory instructions; and then they pretended that, on account of the distance, it was difficult to explain the course which he was to pursue. "Again and again," continued the right hon. baronet, "I say, do not enter into this war without a becoming spirit—a spirit becoming the name and character of England. Do not forget the peculiar character of the people with whom you have to deal, and so temper your measures that as little evil as possible may remain. Remember that the character of the people has lasted for many generations—that it is the same now which was given to them by Pliny and many subsequent writers. It is your duty to vindicate the honour of England where vindication is necessary, and to demand reparation wherever reparation is due. But God grant that all this may lead to the restoration of amicable relations with China, with little disturbance of our relations with other nations! In the absence of every confidence in Her Majesty's Ministers, I will express a wish in which the party of the right hon. member for Edinburgh would join. I would pray the Almighty Disposer, from whom all just counsels and good works proceed—I pray to God that he will dispose the minds of the people, and defend them from the evils which they may deserve—I pray to God that he will avert from them the calamities, and turn from us the evils, which I must say the neglect and incapacity of our rulers have most righteously deserved."

Lord Palmerston defended the conduct of the Government and of its agent, Captain Elliot, whose zeal, courage, and patience, he said, had been signally exhibited in these transactions. As to the opium trade, he denied that, if Parliament had given the Ministry the power, and they had given the superintendent the right, of issuing an order prohibiting British subjects from engaging in that trade, it would have been obeyed. The trade, expelled from Canton, would have taken refuge in other places. It would have gone along the coast of China, studded with islands, indented with harbours, lined with cities and towns, all thirsting for trade, of whatever description, but eager for trade in this especial article; and instead of being concentrated, as now, it would be diffused over that extensive district. Without a vast police and preventive force, the instructions which the Ministry were ridiculed for not sending would have been nothing more than waste paper. Our merchants, too, would carry on the trade under the American flag; under that flag they would snap their fingers at our cruisers, and thus the trade in opium would not be put down. Instead, therefore, of thinking himself liable to the censure of the House, he absolutely claimed merit for not having given to the superintendent at Canton such powers and instructions as the right hon. member for Penryn (Sir James Graham) recommended, Lord

Palmerston read a memorial addressed by a number of American merchants to their own Government, in which they condemned the course adopted by the Chinese Commissioner Lin as no better than robbery, and recommended vigorous co-operation on the part of America and France with the British Government in obtaining satisfaction, and placing the commerce with China on a satisfactory footing. He also read a letter addressed to himself by thirty London firms engaged in the China trade, who declared their deliberate opinion that, unless the measures of the Government were followed up with firmness and energy, the trade with China could no longer be conducted with security to life and property, or with credit and advantage to the British nation. The noble lord, therefore, called upon the friends of the Government to support them in resisting this motion of censure which they did not deserve—this palpable endeavour to substitute another Ministry in their place. On a division, the motion was negatived by a majority of 10; the numbers being—ayes, 261; noes, 271.

A few incidents connected with our dispute with China may be given here. In January, 1839, a proclamation was issued by the local government of Canton addressed to all foreigners, announcing the approach of a special Imperial Commissioner to put a stop to the opium traffic, and it was required that the receiving ships on the outside should be all sent away, on penalty of hostile measures. As a warning intimation of the nature of those measures, his approach was heralded by an execution. A native smuggler was suddenly brought down into the square before the foreign factories, escorted by a body of troops, and he was there publicly strangled. All the European flags at Canton were hauled down, and no attention was paid to any remonstrances on the subject. Commissioner Lin issued a characteristic proclamation, not only demanding that every particle of opium on board the ship should be delivered to the Government in order to its being burned, but that the ship should never again dare to bring opium, on pain of forfeiture of goods and death to the crew, but he required a bond that such punishment "would be willingly submitted to."

Under these circumstances Captain Elliot, the British Commissioner, obtained an interview with Lin, who insisted that Mr. Dent, one of the most respectable of the English merchants, should go into the city and appear before his tribunal; to which Captain Elliot consented, on receiving an assurance under the seal of the Imperial Commissioner that the prisoner should not be removed out of his sight. On the same night all the native servants were taken away from the merchants; the supplies were cut off; an arc of boats filled with armed men was formed on the river in front of the factories, and another armed force was placed in their rear. Thus subjected to a rigorous blockade, and at the mercy of the furious Commissioner, Captain Elliot advised the merchants to submit, and deliver up the opium. When this was done, the blockade of the factories, which had lasted a month, ceased at Canton, and leave was given for all to quit except sixteen individuals, who sub-

sequently departed in obedience to an edict from the Government which forbade them ever to return.

Captain Elliot, meantime, wrote urgently to Lord Auckland, Governor-General of India, demanding military protection, and describing the course of "violence and spoliation which had broken up the foundations of this great trade, perhaps for ever." In the August of the same year an affray took place at Macao, between some English sailors and Chinese villagers, in which one of the latter was killed. Commissioner Lin immediately demanded that the homicide should be given up to him to be put to death. This being refused, Lin issued an edict forbidding any provisions or other necessities to be supplied to the British at Macao.

About the same time a British schooner, called the *Black Joke*, while on her way from that port to Hong Kong, was attacked by several Chinese junks and boarded, when several of the Lascars who manned the schooner were cut down and thrown overboard. Mr. Moss, a young Englishman who happened to be on board, was at the same time barbarously maltreated. Happily, another British schooner came up at the critical moment, and the Chinese made off in their boats. In consequence of these proceedings, Captain Elliot, accompanied by a number of the English residents, removed to Hong Kong, where they were protected by the *Volage* and the *Hyacinth*.

Towards the end of the year, Lin, who styled himself "Imperial High Commissioner, and Yang, Viceroy of Wan-tung," issued a decree against the importation of any British goods, concluding thus:—"We, the High Commissioner and Viceroy, are at no loss for skilful translators and interpreters, so that it will be still more easy for us to ascertain the country whence they come. Let, then, every foreign merchant beware! Do not, for a trifling advantage, lose a much more important object, thus involving yourselves in the same unpleasant consequences." Captain Elliot, hoping to mollify the Viceroy by soft words and a submissive manner, petitioned him in the following humble terms:—"England having already enjoyed commercial intercourse with the heavenly dynasty for about 200 years, all that I now beg at this time is the continuance of our legal commerce as of old; and that everything be done in respectful submission to the statutes of the great pure dynasty, while at the same time the laws of my native country be not opposed, thus causing that both may exist and remain together."

Lin's reply is a model of haughty condescension. After enumerating the crimes of the English, he said, "Having already closed the port against you, properly speaking, we ought to hold no further communication with you; but seeing that you have addressed a duly prepared petition, begging and praying for certain favours, we, out of pure indulgence, now take up the reason of our conduct, and with the utmost clearness make the same known unto you, causing at the same time that all the people of your country, as well as yourself, may equally and alike know the cause why this port is now shut against you."



CAPTURE OF TING-HAE-HEEN.

Some concessions were, however, made, and the trade was resumed below the Boca Tigris, until an unfortunate occurrence caused further complications. Captain Warner of the *Thomas Coutts*, having arrived from Singapore, instead of repairing to Hong Kong, broke through the regulations of the British superintendent, proceeded direct to the Boca Tigris, and signed the required bond of consent to the new laws involving the infliction of capital punishment by Chinese forms of trial. In consequence of this, Lin required that all other British ships should enter only on the same terms. Matters now proceeded to hostilities. On the 3rd of November a Chinese squadron of twenty-nine sail anchored close to the British vessels, when the Chinese demanded that an Englishman should be delivered up to them. Captain Smith resolved to compel them to return to their former anchorage. At noon, therefore, the signal was made to engage, and the ships then lying hove to at the extreme end of the Chinese line, bore away ahead in close order, having the wind on the starboard beam. In this way, and under easy sail, they ran down the Chinese line, pouring in a destructive fire. The lateral direction of the wind enabled the ships to perform the same evolution from the other extreme of the line, running up again with their larboard broadsides bearing. The Chinese answered with much spirit, but the terrible effect of the English fire was soon manifest. One war junk blew up at pistol-shot distance from the *Volage*, three were sunk, and several others water-logged. In less than three quarters of an hour the Chinese admiral retired in great distress to his former anchorage. The Chinese authorities at Canton sent a boat-load of poisoned tea packed in small parcels to be sold to the English sailors; but the boat happened to be captured by Chinese pirates, who sold the cargo to their countrymen, many of whom died in consequence. At the same time, rewards on a graduated scale were offered for the heads of the English: 20,000 Spanish dollars for an English man-of-war, 3,000 for an English commander, and so on. The proof required of having destroyed a ship was her board with her name—of having killed an Englishman, his head; either of which, on being delivered to any district magistrate, entitled the bearer to receive the promised reward. Englishmen sailing or pulling in small schooners or boats were ordered to be attacked and exterminated. The proclamation said, “Honours, rewards, and happiness will be the lot of him who kills an Englishman.” An attempt was also made to burn the British shipping, which was happily frustrated. On a very dark night a number of fire-rafts, constructed of very old fishing boats filled with combustible materials and ignited, were set afloat towards the vessels, but the danger was perceived in time to be avoided.

But the crisis was now at hand. On Sunday the 5th of July, 1840, the English captured the island of Chusan, and for the first time wrested from his Celestial Majesty a portion of his dominions. On the previous day the *Wellesley*, the *Conway*, the *Alligator*, the *Rattlesnake*, and two transports arrived in the anchorage

of Chusan harbour, the ships of war taking up a position in front of a hill upon which there was a large temple or “joss house.” A summons to surrender was answered by the appearance of the Chinese admiral and two mandarins on board the *Wellesley*, who acknowledged their inability to resist, but attempted to evade the requirement. They were told that if the city did not surrender by daybreak next morning, it would be attacked. In the morning the hill and shore were crowded with troops, and from the mast heads the city was seen at the distance of a mile with the walls well manned. On Temple Hill, about the landing place, and on a round tower adjacent, were planted twenty-four guns of small calibre, while a number of war junks hovered near our ships. Major-General Burrell, however, determined to land his troops. A fire was immediately opened upon them from the batteries on shore, and from the war junks. These were soon silenced by broadsides from the British ships. The invading force was then placed in position before the city, when a fire was opened from the walls, which was kept up till midnight without doing any execution whatever. Early on the morning of the 6th ten guns were got into position within 400 yards of the walls, on which the flags were seen floating as they had been on the preceding evening. But no sound was heard, no human being was visible; all was as still as a city of the dead. A reconnoitring party advanced to see whether it had been evacuated, and scaled the walls by means of a ladder which was found outside. Then was given a touching proof of the great truth that God has made of one blood all the nations that dwell upon the earth, and that however different portions of our race may stigmatise one another as barbarians, in times of emergency and danger they mutually recognise the instincts and sympathies of a common nature. Two unarmed Chinese appeared above the gate, and hung a placard over the wall, on which was inscribed this appeal—“*Save us for the sake of our wives and children.*”

A company of the 49th Regiment took possession of the principal gate, and the British flag was planted on the walls of the city of Ting-hae-heen. The walls were built of granite and brick, and were about six miles in circumference, with numerous bastions, surrounded by a ditch or canal about twenty-five feet wide, so that the place could have been easily defended by good troops.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Progress of the Chinese War—Keshen, the Imperial Commissioner—His Duplicity—Convention between him and the British Plenipotentiary—Violated by the Chinese, and Disallowed by both Governments—Attack on Canton—Wrath of the Emperor—Report of Keshen on the National Defences—The Emperor's Reply—Second Attack on Canton, and Capture of the Forts—Suspension of Hostilities—Unsatisfactory Arrangement—Sir Henry Pottinger, the new Plenipotentiary—Vigorous Prosecution of the War—Capture of Amoy—Advance of the Squadron into the Interior—Capture of Chinghae, Ning-po, and Chapoo—Arrival of the Armament at Chinkienjefoo, which is taken by Assault—Nankin—Suspension of Hostilities—Negotiations for Peace—Terms of the Treaty—Report of the Chinese Commissioner to the Emperor.

THE climate of Chusan was found to be very unhealthy, and our men suffered severely, their sufferings being

aggravated by the scarcity of fresh provisions. Consequently, soon after taking the island, only about 2,000 out of 3,650 men were fit for duty. Shortly after, Admiral Elliot, accompanied by Captain Elliot, sailed with part of the squadron northwards, and arrived on the 9th of August, 1840, at the harbour of Guef, into which the Peho or Pekin river flows. Next day he proceeded into the mouth of the river in the steamer, with the boats of all the men-of-war. The steamer having anchored at the bar, the boats were sent up the river with a flag of truce. On their arrival off the forts at the entrance, a mandarin boat pushed off to them, and received the admiral's letter, ten days being demanded for an answer. In the meantime, the boats proceeded to the neighbouring islands to obtain bullocks and other supplies. At the time appointed for an answer, an interview was granted to the admiral by Keshen, the Imperial Commissioner, the third man in the empire, a mandarin of first class and red button. Negotiations were protracted till the 15th of September, Admiral Elliot agreeing that they should be concluded at Canton, where Keshen was to take the place of Commissioner Lin, who was recalled, and obliged to answer for his conduct in dealing so leniently with the "barbarians," which excited the highest displeasure of the Emperor.

Keshen represented himself as being invested with full powers to deal with the English, and adjust the quarrel between them and the Chinese Government. He had cunningly transferred the scene of negotiations to Canton, in order to secure time to strengthen the forts and prepare for defence. He accordingly employed the interval busily in erecting new batteries at the Bogue, barricading the bars in the river by sinking boats laden with stones, throwing up breastworks near Canton, and levying troops. The English Commissioner, wearied and irritated by these proceedings, gave directions to Commodore Bremer to proceed at once to compulsory methods of bringing the Chinese to reason. On the 7th of January, therefore, he opened fire on the Bogue forts, on two of which the English flag very soon floated. Next morning, when everything was ready to attack the principal fort, Annughoy, a flag of truce was sent by the Chinese, and hostilities were suspended. Keshen offered to adjust matters immediately, and on the 20th a circular appeared, signed by Captain Elliot, and dated Macao, addressed to "Her Britannic Majesty's subjects," stating that Her Majesty's plenipotentiary had to announce the conclusion of preliminary arrangements between the Imperial Commissioner and himself, involving the following conditions:—1st. The cession of the harbour and island of Hong Kong to the British Crown. 2nd. An indemnity to the British Government of 6,000,000 dollars, to be paid in annual instalments in six years. 3rd. Direct official intercourse between the two countries upon equal footing. It was quite evident that Her Majesty's plenipotentiary did not understand the sort of people he had to deal with; otherwise, he would not have arrested the operations of Commodore Bremer till he had all the principal forts in his posses-

sion. In fact he was completely duped by Keshen, who boasted as follows:—"The English barbarians are now obedient to orders, and by an official document have restored Tinghae and Shakow, invoking me, with the most earnest importunity, that I should for them report and beg the Imperial favour. At present all affairs are perfectly well settled. The former order for stopping their trade, and cutting off the supplies of provisions, it is unnecessary to enforce; it is for this purpose that I issue these orders."

The convention, which did not contain a word about the opium trade, gave great dissatisfaction at home, and Lord John Russell declared in the House of Commons, on the 6th of May, that it had been disapproved of by the Government; that Captain Elliot had been recalled, and Sir Henry Pottinger appointed plenipotentiary in his stead. The Chinese, however, soon violated their engagements. On the 19th of February an English boat was fired upon from North Wang-ton, in consequence of which the squadron under Captain Sir H. Flemming Senhouse attacked the forts on the 26th of February, and in a very short time the British colours were flying on the whole chain of these celebrated fortifications, and the British became masters of the islands without the loss of a single man. Proceeding up the river towards the Whampoa Reach they found it fortified with upwards of forty war junks, and the Cambridge, an old East Indiaman. But they were all silenced in an hour, when the marines and small-arm men were landed and stormed the works, driving before them upwards of 3,000 Chinese troops, and killing nearly 300. Next day Sir Gordon Bremer joined the advanced squadron, and the boats were pushed forward within gun-shot of Howgna's fort; and thus, for the first time, were foreign ships seen from the walls of Canton. On the 2nd of May the Cruiser came up, having on board Major-General Sir Hugh Gough, who took command of the land forces. On approaching the fort it was found to be abandoned, as well as those higher up the river, the Chinese having fired all their guns and fled. The Prefect or Governor of Canton then made his appearance, accompanied by the Hong merchants, announcing that Keshen having been recalled and degraded, and the new Commissioner not having arrived, there was no authority to treat for peace. Captain Elliot again hesitating, requested the naval and military commanders to make no further movement towards the city until it was seen what was the disposition of the provincial authorities at Canton. But Sir G. Bremer observed in a despatch that he feared the forbearance was misunderstood, and that a further punishment must be inflicted before that arrogant and perfidious Government was brought to reason. He was right; for on the 17th of March a flag of truce, with a message sent by Captain Elliot to the Imperial Commissioner, was fired upon by the Chinese. In consequence of this, a force under Captain Herbert, who was in advance of the rest of the armament, carried in succession all the forts up to Canton, taking, sinking, burning, and otherwise destroying the flotilla of the enemy, and hoisted the Union Jack the same day on the walls of the British

factory; the guns of the squadron commanding the approaches to the city, and thus placing it entirely at our mercy.

It then appeared that the Imperial Government had rejected the treaty and determined on war. Four imperial edicts were issued, which breathed fierce wrath and scorn against the English, whom the emperor declared to be like dogs or sheep in their dispositions, and stating that both gods and men were indignant at their conduct, and that neither heaven nor earth could bear with them any longer. The unhappy Keshen was delivered over to the board of punishment, though still retaining his command. It is not easy to understand the difficulties in which an Imperial Commissioner was placed under that excessively ignorant and intensely despotic Government. A few extracts from the Chinese documents bearing upon the subject will show how the British invasion was regarded from the Imperial point of view. They were translated by Mr. Thom, the interpreter of the British authorities, and this is a sufficient voucher for their authenticity and the fidelity of the translation. As the report of Keshen is a very able and a most instructive document, which throws the strongest light upon the condition of the celestial empire, and the spirit of its Government, the greater part of it is here reproduced, together with the reply and proclamation of the emperor:—"The slave Keshen, a high minister of state, and acting Governor of the two Kwang provinces, kneeling, presents before the throne of the Great Emperor a statement relating how that the English foreigners have sent a messenger to Chékeang to restore Tinghae, how that they have already restored us the forts of Shakow (Chumpee) and Takok, and the cruising vessels and salt junks, which they had previously captured, all of which have been duly received; and now that the ships of war of the said foreigners have already retired to the outer ocean, the said slave respectfully takes all the circumstances, and along with his most attentive observations on the military position of the country, the material of war, and the disposition of the people, offers them up, begging that a sacred glance may be bestowed upon the same. Whereas your slave, with a view to the defence of the country and protection of the people, previously to the receipt of your Majesty's commands, foolishly and confusedly begged for a display of Imperial clemency in favour of the English foreigners; at the same time (seeing that such was opposed to your Majesty's wishes), your slave repeatedly begged that his crime might be visited with the heaviest punishment, as is duly recorded. On the 28th day of the twelfth moon of last year (the 20th of January, 1841), I received a dispatch from the private council to the following effect:—"We have received the following imperial edict:—"Whereas Keshen has reported to us the measures he has taken in reference to the circumstances of the English foreigners, that as these rebellious foreigners are without reason, and refuse to listen to our commands, a dreadful example of severity ought immediately be made in their regard. Already has a flying despatch been made to the different provinces of Hoonan, Syechuen, and Kweichow,

that 4,000 soldiers be immediately got ready and sent with all haste to Canton, there to await orders. Cause, therefore, that Keshen, in concert with Lin Tschsen and Tang Tingching, take the necessary steps for settling this business. If the rebellious foreigners dare to approach our inner shores, let them be immediately exterminated." And successively on the 4th day of the present moon, (26th of January, 1841), I received the following Imperial edict from the court direct:—"Whereas Keshen has addressed to me a document in reference to the present circumstances of the English foreigners, which on glancing over we completely understand, cause that our previous edict be put in effect with implicit submission; let our military force be plentifully assembled together, and a complete display of heavenly majesty made in the utter extirpation of the rebels. As far as regards the expense necessary for these military operations, no matter whether it be the duties arising from foreign commerce or the land tax, you are hereby permitted to consult as to ways and means, and make true account of the expenditure of such revenues. Should these not be sufficient, you can report the same to me, and wait our further orders, &c. Respect this.' Your slave, while kneeling and hearing these commands read, reflected that though he had conditionally granted the several items (of the foreigners' demands), yet he but barely promised to make a representation of them to your Majesty in their behalf. Thus, in reference to one article, viz., the opening of the trade, although it appears that they (the foreigners) had requested that this might take place during the first decade of the present moon (23rd of January till the 1st of February), yet up till now I have not dared to permit it.

"But your slave is a man of confused and dull understanding. What he has done has, unhappily, not met with the views of His Sacred Majesty. Fearing and trembling as I am, how shall I find words to give expression to my feelings? Humbly remembering that your slave's person has received marks of imperial goodness, his conscience is not hardened. How should I dare, while engaged on the important duty of curbing these outside foreigners, and struggling amid danger and difficulty, to strive after forbidden repose? From the moment that I came down to Canton have I been the victim of the craft and wiles of these presuming foreigners. In every instance are they quite ungovernable, until that my head aches and my heart is rent, and my morning meal comes to me without relish. Thus, for example, on one occasion, we gave the foreigners battle, but our men showed little firmness. We then requested that a manifestation of divine Majesty might be made in their annihilation; but alas! the circumstances of the case and the wishes of my heart are sadly opposed! All these facts have I offered up to your Majesty in repeated statements, praying that your Majesty would bestow thereon a holy glance. Now, it appears that after these said foreigners had sent a person to Chekeang to deliver up Tinghae, and had restored all that they had captured in Kwangtung, and withdrawn their ships of war to the outer ocean, Elliot re-

quested a personal interview with me; and as your slave had not yet in person inspected the Bocca Tigris, and as the troops ordered from the several provinces had not yet arrived, it did not seem prudent to show any symptoms of dislike to his proposal, which would have given rise to suspicion on his part, and thus prematurely brought on a collision. So your slave took advantage of the opportunity to visit and inspect the Bocca Tigris, and on the third day (25th January, 1841) left the city, and, embarking on shipboard, approached Sze Yang (Lion's Ocean), on the Canton river, whither Elliot soon came in a wheeled fire-ship, and begged for an interview. He scarcely brought several tens of persons in his train; and on that day his language and demeanour was exceedingly respectful. But he handed up to me a rough draft of several regulations which he had planned, the most of which regarded the troublesome minutiae of commerce; and, at the same time, he agreed that afterwards, in relation to the bringing of opium, the leaking out syces, or smuggling, he was quite willing that ship and cargo should be confiscated. But among the articles he proposed there were some items quite impossible to be granted. Your slave at the time pointed them out, and rebuked him, when the foreigner immediately begged that they might be discussed and amended. I consented that he might alter them, but told him he must wait till they had been maturely canvassed, and handed up to your Majesty for examination and approval. Your slave, after having parted with Elliot, found that the Sze He Yang (second bar) is distant from the Bocca Tigris about sixty le (twenty miles); but even there the sea vast, the billows boiling, and the wind fierce. Suddenly we came on the ocean, in all its majesty. No inland river can in any measure be compared to it. Your slave immediately changed his boat for a vessel capable of navigating the high seas, and, having arrived at the Bocca Tigris, made a most careful inspection of all the forts round about. If they may not be said to be utterly isolated on the four sides, and rising up alone in the midst of the ocean, yet are they situated beyond the extremity of our hills, and quite approachable from the sea. Supposing them to be surrounded and blockaded, even so much as provision for the troops it would be found difficult to introduce. Your slave then proceeded to measure the depth of the water, beginning at the Bocca Tigris, and sounding till he came to Canton, and found it at high water to be from one chang (two fathoms) and upwards to three and four chang, varying continually. Now, we all know that the principal cause of these forts being erected was as a barrier to merchant ships, which draw more water, and which, in time of peace, when they submit to constraint, dare not pass the bounds, or to go round about; but if they were to bring troops with intention to rebel, they may sneak in clandestinely through every hole and corner. There is no necessity for their passing before the forts; and thus may they proceed straight up to the provincial city itself. Moreover, after having passed the Bocca Tigris, though we may add obstruction to obstruction, yet such

is the nature of the country, that there is no important point by which we may hold it. Again, in reference to the strength of our soldiers, I find that keeping off the foreigners must be done by sea-fights; and to fight well at sea we must have good marine troops. I have now to feel grateful to your Majesty for especially land troops from the different provinces. This shows the great and sacred anxiety your Majesty feels in the matter. But then these troops must go on board our sea-going ships before that they can give battle to the foreigners; and if they were not firm, or if they were not accustomed to the winds and waves, it might entail on us the calamity of a defeat. Now, they are not accustomed to go on board ships and handle them; so that we cannot but use marine soldiers. The marine troops of Canton province are drawn by invitation from the sea-side, and their quality is irregular and uncertain. I had previously heard a rumour that on the fifteenth day of the twelfth moon (January 7, 1841), after the battle, the whole of these soldiers went to their Tetuh, or general, and under false pretences extorted money from him, otherwise they disband; and lately I went to the Tetuh, and asked him face to face concerning it, when he said that it was quite true, and that he, the Tetuh, having no remedy, was obliged to pawn his clothes and things, by which means he was enabled to give a bonus of a couple of dollars to each of his Canton soldiers, and thus got them to remain at their posts till now. If, then, the disposition of these soldiers is greatly to be lamented, as it is, supposing at the most critical moment, when we had actually joined battle, these marine forces were to be found weak and without energy, it might lead to the most fatal consequences; and although we might have veteran troops among them, yet there would be no means of inspiring them with a portion of their skill and steadiness. Moreover, our war-ships are neither large nor strong; they are not capable of sustaining large guns, so that they are unable to repulse the foreigners; and these are the remarks I have to offer on the weakness of our soldiery. I have also found, on careful examination, that the characteristics of the people of Canton province are falsehood, ingratitude, and greediness—putting out of the question those who are actual traitors, and whom there is no occasion to speak about. The rest have all been born and dwell in the same place, mixed up with the foreigners. They are constantly accustomed to see them, and for many years have been as intimate with them as very brothers. They are not at all like the people of Tinghae, who having never been accustomed to hold intercourse with foreigners, immediately discovered them to be a distinct species. But if we suppose that what they did there, they had done here, if these said foreigners had deceitfully distributed their paltry presents, and set the machinery of their tricks to work, I really fear that the whole people of the province would have been seduced to them—they would certainly not have shown the unbending firmness of the Tinghae people. Such are the observations I have got to offer on the flexible disposition of the Canton people, which circumstance gives us

still more cause for anxiety. Your slave has again and again resolved the matter in his anxious mind! In so far as it regards his own person, it is unworthy of his notice; but the consequences touching the vital interests

your sacred Majesty's wishes. Both of these are crimes which affect his poor life; but what is there in this worthy of pity or consideration? Still your slave, though he has sinned in not being able to settle matters



VICTORIA, HONG KONG.

of the country, and the lives of the people involved in it, are vast, and extending to posterity; but, alas! your slave has sinned in giving battle, when he could not command destiny to give him the victory; and he has no less sinned in being unable to settle matters in unison with

in unison with your sacred Majesty's wishes, yet the territory and people of Canton still exist, and look up to your most sacred Majesty for your gracious support and protection; while your slave, by having sinned in giving battle when fate denied him the victory, has soiled

the glory of his master, and poured out the lives of his people; and still more, left himself without a sensible plan to put into operation: therefore it is that, after having duly consulted with the Tartar General of the garrison and his Adjutants, Lieutenant-Governor, the literary Chancellor, the Judge and Treasurer, the Intendants of

different provinces, time is still necessary for that object, nor can they all arrive at once; and the assembling of a large body is not a thing that can be done quietly; the native traitors are sure to give timely notice of it, and the foreigners would, in the first instance, give loose to their madness and extravagance. Your slave is



THE PORCELAIN TOWER AT NANKIN.

Circuit, the chief magistrates of larger and lesser districts, and the ex-governors, Lin Tsihten and Tang Tungching, &c., we have unanimously come to the conclusion that our defences are not to be relied on, and that in the tug of battle our troops will not stand their ground. Moreover, in regard to troops which have been ordered by your Majesty from the

vexed to death thinking of these things; even still he loathes his food, and still sleep has forsaken his eyelids, forasmuch as he does not shrink from the heavy guilt he is incurring in taking all these facts, the results of his diligent inquiries, and with them annoying the ears of Heaven's Son; and at the same time he takes everything connected with foreigners, and all the foreign letters,

and hands them up for Imperial inspection. He humbly hopes that the holy one will look down with pity and compassion on the black-haired race, and shower upon them an extra measure of clemency in granting what is therein requested, so that the people of the land may not be turned to ashes. In times of difficulty is seen good government; victory is but a transient thing; in restraining the ruin that is before our eyes, we ought carefully to eradicate the cause of it for after ages. In reference to all the circumstances contained in this, whether the result of my conference with the high provincial officers or of my own diligent investigation, I only hope that your sacred Majesty will condescend to inquire regarding them, and I beg that your Majesty will specially appoint a high officer to come here to ascertain their truth. Your slave has been actuated by a desire to save the country and the people from first to last, and not swayed by the smallest atoms of fear; and, still more, he dare not make use of the least glossing or deception. Inasmuch, therefore, this respectful memorial is forwarded at the rate of 600 *le* a day, humbly hoping that the Emperor's holy glance may be bestowed thereon. A respectful memorial."

The Emperor's reply:—

"On the 25th day of the first moon of the 21st year of Taon-Kwang (16th of February, 1841), the following remarks, written with the vermilion pencil, were received in reply:—"We can on no account calmly put up with the insults and befouling of these rebellious foreigners as you have done. Blinded and unwilling to see as you are, dare you still have the hardihood to turn your back on our commands, to continue receiving the foreigners' documents, and even to beg favours in their behalf? Such proceedings pass the bounds of reason. Impotent and worthless that you are, what sort of heart is contained within your breast? Not only do you contentedly take in their insults and threats, but you even dare to hold up certain passages with intent to frighten us. But know that we have no coward fears. Beside this, we shall again announce our pleasure. Respect this."

"At five o'clock on the 28th day of the 2nd moon, (March 20th, 1841), the Imperial commands arrived in this province, as follows:—"The English rebelling on a former occasion, and having seized upon the fortresses of Shakuk and Takuk, wounding our high and subordinate officer and troops, have caused us to gnash our teeth with combined imprecation. We therefore specially deputed Yihshan, Tungwan, and Yangfang to assemble from every quarter the efficient troops, and to advance and exterminate the enemy. But now they have attacked and destroyed the fortress of Tinmun (Bocca Tigris), and even recklessly dared to approach near the confines of the city (Canton), creating vast confusion. Being destitute of all reason, contemptuously regarding our celestial dynasty, they have carried their unsubmissive rebellions to this extreme, and I, the Emperor, now swear that both powers shall not stand, (one or the other must conquer or die); let Yihshan, Tungwan, Yangfang, at the time reckoned upon for

their arrival, forthwith put in order our patriotic troops, and with individual efforts seize the English barbarians, and make an entire extermination and end of the whole of them. Then will subside our wrathful indignation. If the whole number of them be not thus effectually destroyed, how shall I, the Emperor, be able to answer to the gods of heaven and the earth, and cherish the hopes of our people? Respect this."

"On the 8th of the 3rd moon (30th of March, 1841), His Majesty orders Yihshan, Tungyan, Hoo, E. Lin, and Tang to put in readiness the troops, and most peremptorily make an entire end of the whole, not allowing even one luckless barbarian to escape back to his country; and furthermore, he (the Emperor) will summon a great army, that from the north they may be exterminated by destroying their nests and dens (in England and India), thus cutting them off both root and branch, and not allowing them one foot of ground, all in order to appease His Majesty's Imperial wrath! As for Keshen, who was accused of receiving bribes from the enemy, he is disposed of in a summary manner, the Emperor ordering that he forthwith be cut in sunder at the waist. His Majesty also orders all who officially attended him, whether great or small, his relations and all who appertain to him, to be decapitated indiscriminately! He disposes of another unhappy wretch, Paontsung (accused of traitorously combining with the English), by ordering him to be put to a slow and ignominious death, by having his flesh cut from his bones in small bits; and further that his native place be laid waste for one hundred *le* round, and his relatives be sentenced to the penalty of transportation! His Celestial Majesty concludes his bloody proclamation, as follows:—"Let the peacock feather be plucked from the cap of Yihshan for his imbecility and tardiness in bringing forward the troops; let Lungwan be disgraced two degrees of rank; and let Yangfan be deprived of the truly brave How; and let every officer in the province of Canton, whether high or subordinate, be deprived of his official button, until they make good their delinquencies by efficiency of effort. Respect this."

At the end of March Sir G. Bremer left Canton for Calcutta to obtain reinforcements. In the meantime, although the trade was partially re-opened, large bodies of Tartar troops were constantly arriving at Canton, and it became evident that the Chinese were acting in bad faith, and meditating hostilities. In consequence of this, it was determined to advance again upon Canton. The first movement was to take possession of the British factories, which was done by one of the columns under the command of Major Pratt; Sir H. Gough commanded the other column, which was towed by the *Nemesis* in a fleet of small craft till it reached a point on the line of the river five miles above the factories. The heights to the north of Canton, crowned by four strong forts, and the city walls appeared to be about three miles and a half distant; the intermediate ground undulating much, and intersected by hollows under wet paddy cultivation, enabled Sir Hugh Gough to take up

successive positions until he approached within range of the forts on the heights and the northern face of the city walls. Having got up the rocket battery and the artillery, a heavy fire was kept upon two of the forts which had annoyed the attacking party most. A combined assault by both columns was soon made, and in little more than half an hour after the order to advance was given the British troops looked down on Canton within a hundred paces of its walls. A strongly entrenched camp of considerable extent, occupied apparently by about 4,000 men, lay to the north-east of the city upon rising ground, and from this it was evident that a formidable attack was about to be made upon the British. This encampment was assaulted in gallant style, by a column under the command of Major-General Burrell. The enemy were driven back at all points, and fled across the country; the encampment was burnt; the magazines, of which there were several, were blown up; and the permanent building, of considerable extent, set on fire. The following morning a flag of truce appeared on the walls of the city, when Sir Hugh Gough deputed Mr. Thom, the interpreter, to ascertain the cause. A mandarin stated that they wished for peace. General Gough, in reply, explained that he was compelled to adopt this course in consequence of repeated insults and breaches of faith; that he would treat with none but the general commanding the Chinese troops; that the British plenipotentiary was present, and that if he did not receive a satisfactory answer in two hours, the white flag would be struck.

Various parleys took place in consequence, and ultimately Captain Elliot agreed to the following terms:—1st. The Imperial Commissioner and the Tartar troops to remove sixty miles from the city. 2nd. 6,000,000 dollars to be paid in one week for the use of the Crown of England, 1,000,000 before the next day at sunset. The British forces to remain in their actual position till the whole was paid. The losses occasioned by the destruction of the factories, &c., to be paid within one week. With this adjustment General Gough expressed his dissatisfaction in a despatch, saying:—"Whatever might be my sentiments, my duty was to acquiesce. The attack, which was to commence in forty-five minutes, was countermanded, and the feelings of the Chinese were spared. Of the policy of the measure I do not consider myself a competent judge; but I say, feeling as I would have been responsible that Canton should be equally spared with its defences, that not a soldier should have entered the town further than the fortified heights within its walls." That the general could have guaranteed this was evident from an interesting incident illustrating the admirable discipline of his troops. The soldiers of the 49th Regiment finding a quantity of ardent spirits called sham-shu in the village they had taken, without orders, or the previous knowledge of their officers, brought the jars containing the liquor and broke them in front of the corps.

Sir Henry Pottinger, who succeeded Captain Elliot, with orders to bring the war to a satisfactory conclusion,

issued a proclamation warning the British merchants that he would allow no commercial interests to interfere with this paramount object. The squadron with which he sailed anchored on the 25th of August in the harbour of Amoy, which contained a population of 70,000, and a garrison of 10,000, with 500 guns mounted. The fortifications were very strong, one of the batteries being built of solid granite, fifteen feet thick at the bottom, and nine at the top, and faced with mud two feet thick—a work so strong and so well built that four hours' point blank firing by our guns failed to make a single breach in it. The Chinese regarded this stronghold as impregnable. The guns from the ships, however, were brought to bear upon it. The Chinese guns were partially silenced, and, under cover of the firing, the Royal Irish, with Sir Hugh Gough at their head, effected a landing, being towed in boats to the shore. The Chinese, after discharging a few arrows and shots, fled precipitately over the hills to the city. No further resistance was made, and before dusk the fortifications were in our possession. The next morning Sir Hugh Gough, at the head of the troops, marched into the city, meeting with no opposition, the mandarins and soldiers having all fled. This success was attained without the loss of a single life on our part. The facility with which this great stronghold was captured was a terrible blow to the pride of the high officials. When the British troops landed, the mandarin who was second in command rushed into the sea and drowned himself; another was seen to cut his throat, and fall in the front of the soldiers as they advanced.

On the 30th of August the troops were withdrawn from the city, and a garrison of 500 men was left on an adjoining island. The viceroy of the provinces and a number of high officers witnessed the attack from the heights above the town, so that the moral effect of the fall of the city must have greatly facilitated further conquests.

In September the expedition sailed to Chusan, where strong fortifications had been erected; but the walls were escalated without opposition on the 1st of October. The expedition next proceeded to Ning-po, and on the 9th of October the whole squadron was anchored off that large and opulent city, which was surrounded by a wall thirty-seven feet thick, and twenty-two feet high, with very substantial iron-plated gates at the east and west ends, two sides of it being further defended by steep rocks. But nothing that Chinese ingenuity and wealth could accomplish in the way of defensive works was able to stand before the English. Our troops were landed on the 10th from the ships under the command of Admiral Sir W. Parker, and about noon the British colours were planted on all the fortifications, the defences were reduced to a ruinous state, the Chinese abandoned their guns and fled over the heights in all directions, and in a short time the city was in complete possession of the British commanders. It is gratifying to be able to state that the conduct of the troops towards the inhabitants was such as to call forth the warmest commendation from the com-

mandar-in-chief. Sir Hugh Gough, in his despatch, remarked upon this victory, saying:—"The second city of the province of Che-Keang, the walls of which are nearly five miles in circumference, with a population of 300,000 souls, has thus fallen into our hands. The people all appear desirous of throwing themselves under British protection, saying publicly that their mandarins had deserted them, and their own soldiers are unable to protect them. I have assembled some of the most respectable and influential of the mercantile class that have remained, and have assured them of my anxiety to afford them all the protection consistent with our instructions to press the Chinese Government. Proclamations have been issued, calling upon the people to open their shops, which I have engaged shall not be molested. This they have done to some extent, and confidence appears to be increasing."

No other event of importance occurred during the winter. The Chinese made several attempts to drive the British out of that city, and a force of picked soldiers, fine muscular men, including 500 of the Imperial body guard, were sent to exterminate the "barbarians," but they were easily defeated. Chapoo was another of the towns taken by the British. Of this place the following sketch was given by an eye-witness:—"Chapoo presents many features in common with all Chinese towns: narrow, irregular, and filthy streets, stagnant canals, and crowded buildings, stores of grain, and immense temples used as public buildings as well as places of worship. There are two distinct towns, the one occupied by the original inhabitants of the country, the other by their conquerors. Both cover a space about four miles in circuit. A wall divides the Tartars and the Chinese. Both live as a separate people, obeying the same laws, however, wearing the same dress, and speaking the same language, but in their social habits differing from each other in a remarkable degree. The Tartar town is laid out like a compact encampment, and consists of lines of huts, running parallel, and only interrupted by the canals. Each hut has its own little compound, and on the bamboo fence, separating it from its neighbour, a rich vine is almost in every instance grown. The remaining space is occupied by the family well, a peach-tree, and a few beautiful evergreens, tastefully arranged, and twisted into grotesque shapes. The interior is less pleasing, in general only cold, damp clay floor, a few chairs, tables, chests, and rude bedsteads; and in the richness of their dress alone do they rival the Chinese."

On the 20th of July, 1842, the fleet, which consisted of upwards of seventy sail, proceeding up the Woosung river, reached the city Chin-Keang-Foo, which was also strongly fortified, and had besides an encampment in front, with immense lines of works to defend the entrances of two rivers that joined there. But here also our arms quickly prevailed. The city surrendered, and the high mandarins fled; but the Tartars fought desperately, and the dead bodies of their women and children were found in every house, drowned or otherwise killed by their own people, to prevent their falling into the hands of our soldiers. A vast number of Tartar fathers com-

mitted suicide after destroying their families, and our troops found the city almost entirely deserted, the place having become uninhabitable from the number of dead bodies.

The squadron proceeded, on the 4th of August, up the river Yang-tse-Keang towards Nankin, off which city it cast anchor on the 9th of that month. Sir H. Gough, in his despatch, gives the following account of this immense city, the second in extent and population in the Chinese dominions:—"The northern angle reaches to within about 700 paces of the river; and the western face runs for some miles along the base of the wooded heights rising immediately behind it, and is then continued for a great distance upon low ground, having before it a deep canal which also extends along the southern face serving, as a wet ditch to both. There is a very large suburb on the low ground in front of the west and south faces, and at the south-east angle is the Tartar city, which is a separate fortress, divided from the Chinese town by high walls. The eastern face extends in an irregular line for many miles, running towards the south over a spur of Chung Shan, a precipitous mountain overlooking the whole country, the base of which commands the rampart. In this face are three gates. The most northerly (the Teshing) is approachable by a paved road, running between wooded hills to within 500 paces of the walls, whence it is carried along a cultivated flat; the next (the Taiping) is within a few hundred yards of the base of Chung Shan, and that to the south (the Chan Yang) enters the Tartar city. There is a long line of unbroken wall between the Teshing gate and the river, hardly approachable from swamps and low paddy land, and the space between the Teshing and Taiping gates is occupied by rather an extensive gate."

At length the Chinese saw that resistance was vain, and that they must come to terms, as the "barbarians" could not be exterminated. Full powers had been given to three commissioners—Keying, a Tartar general belonging to the Imperial family, Elepo, and New Ké, general of the two Keang provinces—to negotiate a treaty of peace, which, after various conferences, was concluded on the 26th of August. It embraced the following stipulations:—The payment by the Chinese of 21,000,000 dollars; the opening of the new ports of Canton, Amoy, Foo-chow-foo, Ningpo, and Shanghai, to British merchants, with permission to consular officers to reside there; the cession of the island of Hong Kong to the British in perpetuity; correspondence to be conducted on terms of perfect equality between the officers of both Governments; and the islands of Chusan and Kolangsoo to be held by the British until the money payments were made, and arrangements for opening the ports were completed.

The Imperial Commissioner, in his report to the Emperor, endeavoured to put the best face upon these calamities and humiliations. "I, your servant," he says, "have examined, and have found what are the unwarrantable demands of the said barbarians, which they so importunately urge, and they are deserving of the utmost hatred. But considering that they have already attacked

and laid in ruins Kingkow, and that not only the rivers, but Chingkeang, it will be difficult to recover speedily, I am apprehensive we shall be blocked up both on the north and south, which will be the heaviest calamity."

Having referred to the various concessions that were extorted, he proceeded thus:—"If we again prepare our armies to maintain those places, it is a difficult matter to engage with them on the waters. Though near to each other, there has not been any fighting for many days; and as to those places which they have taken and keep possession of, will it not be allowed them to return to us our territory, and allow them to trade, since they are willing respectfully to pay the duties? Just now they are sensible, and repent of their errors, and are as obedient as if driven by the wind; and when again united in mutual friendship, benevolence, and truth, all things will go on well. And since they will guard thine own market, and surround and protect the sea-boundaries, there will not be any necessity for recourse to our interference, which will be to the advantage of our country. We request the Imperial will may be sent down to the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of the three provinces, to examine clearly into the duties and trading regulations of the comptroller of maritime customs in the provinces of Canton; and consult about the management of affairs, and fix them on a secure basis. That which the said barbarians have requested with reference to the officers of China is to have ceremonial intercourse upon an equality; and as to the barbarians who have been made captives, and the Chinese traders who have been seduced into the service of the English, the release of all these they most earnestly solicit. I, your servant have examined and found that, with reference to equal official intercourse, it may be unreservedly granted; and as the affairs with the foreigners are finished, and the war ended, the prisoners may also be released, by which harmony and good understanding will be strengthened; for a state of peace will bring repose and gladness, and overthrow factious parties. These matters may be allowed to proceed; and I have left them to the Shewei without discussing them."

CHAPTER I.

Political Tranquillity—Position of the Ministry—The Royal Speech—Debates on the Address—The Syrian Expedition—Speeches of Lord Brougham, Lord Melbourne, and the Duke of Wellington—Speech of Mr. Grote in the House of Commons—Reply of Lord John Russell on the "Finality"—Amendment by Mr. Hume—Speech of Sir Robert Peel—Vote of Thanks to Admiral Sir Robert Stopford for the Capture of Acre—The Turkish Fleet delivered up to Admiral Stopford by the Pasha of Egypt, who is confirmed in his possessions as Hereditary Viceroy of Egypt—The English Poor Law—Ministerial Bill to Continue the Commission—Debate on the Second Reading—Election of Mr. Walter for Nottingham—Operation of the Irish Poor Law—Registration of Voters in Ireland—Bills of Lord Stanley and Lord Morpeth—Proposed Extension of the Franchise in Ireland—Diminution of Irish Electors—The Government Measure carried after Four Nights' Debate by a Majority of Five—Lord Howick's proposed Franchise carried in Committee—Defeat of the Government—Jewish Disabilities—Defeat of the Bill by the Lords—The Scotch Non-Intrusion Question in the House of Lords—Sir Robert Peel proposes a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government—Defeat of the Government by a Majority of One—Dissolution of Parliament—State of Parties—

Lord Melbourne appeals to the Country—The General Election—Conservative Majority—Opening of the New Parliament—The Royal Speech—Vote of Want of Confidence in the Lords—Testimony of the Duke of Wellington to the Importance of the Services of a Peculiar Nature rendered by Lord Melbourne to the Queen—No Confidence Vote in the House of Commons carried by a Majority of Ninety-one—Sir R. Peel Master of the Situation—Resignation of the Melbourne Cabinet—The Peel Ministry—Prorogation of Parliament.

At the opening of 1841 the country might be said to be free from all excitement on the subject of politics. There was no great question at issue, no struggle between rival parties seemed impending. Many of the principal questions which in former years had agitated the public mind had been settled or laid to rest. The Chartist riots seemed to have abated the desire of the leading reformers to extend the suffrage to the working classes. The Established Church was enjoying a welcome calm after the storms through which it had passed; and although Ireland was still regarded as an inexhaustible source of controversy and trouble, the monotonous repetition of Irish topics had so fatigued the public ear that it was not easy now to get a hearing on any Irish question. Besides, it seemed to the Conservatives almost useless to drive Lord Melbourne's Government to the verge of destruction, since it was impossible to get rid of it; for, as if endowed with a charmed life, whenever it appeared to be on the point of dissolution, it was revived and invigorated by the smiles of royalty.

Such being the state of affairs, the opening of Parliament was regarded with comparative indifference. On the 26th of January, the Queen delivered the speech from the throne. The most important matter referred to in it was the question of China, concerning which Her Majesty said:—"Having deemed it necessary to send to the coast of China a naval and military force to demand reparation and redress for injuries inflicted upon some of my subjects by the officers of the Emperor of China, and for indignities offered to an agent of my Crown, I, at the same time, appointed plenipotentiaries to treat upon these matters with the Chinese Government. These plenipotentiaries were, by the last accounts, in negotiation with the Government of China, and it will be a source of much gratification to me if that Government shall be induced by its own sense of justice to bring these matters to a speedy settlement by an amicable arrangement."

The address to the throne was moved in the House of Lords by Earl Ducie, and seconded by Lord Lurgan. One portion of the speech referred to a naval expedition which was sent to co-operate with the army of the Sultan in the Levant, in pursuance of a convention to which the Emperor of Austria was a party. This expedition was referred to as a matter of congratulation by the mover and seconder. Lord Lurgan remarked that the capture of Acre, notwithstanding what had been said of the deficiencies of our navy and arsenals, proved that they were in a state of perfect competency for any purpose which might be required. Nothing was more conspicuous throughout these proceedings, he said, than the high principles of integrity and perfect good faith of the British Govern-

ment, whose conduct had been honest, sincere, straightforward, and forbearing. Another subject of congratulation, in which all warmly concurred, was the birth of an heiress to the throne.

Lord Brougham could not let the address pass in silence. "He did not mean to oppose it, only to remind their lordships that no one who voted for it pledged himself to any proposition that it contained. He was not quite satisfied that France cherished the friendly disposition towards England for which she got credit in the address, nor did he think that the peace of Europe was quite secure. With regard to our interposition in Turkey, the noble Lord remarked that to talk of renovating or re-organising an empire which had been, not for years, but for reigns 'as if stricken with paralysis'—a body which had already decayed and fallen to pieces, seemed to him the most chimerical object that could enter the mind of a statesman." Lord Brougham deprecated the course that had been pursued tending to alienate France for the sake of conciliating Russia, whereas the designs of Russia upon Turkey could be rendered hopeless only by the cordial alliance of France and England.

Lord Melbourne defended his policy with regard to the Levant, and the efforts to preserve the integrity of Turkey as much as possible in its existing state. It was evident, from papers on the table of the House, that it was the intention of the Pasha of Egypt to establish his own independence, to found a new Mahometan state on the shores of the Mediterranean, and by further encroachments to make himself the greatest Mahometan power in that part of the world, if not the only one.

The Duke of Wellington expressed his concurrence in the address, which he hoped would be unanimously adopted. He was one of those who approved of the policy of the measures that had been taken. The state of things in the Levant had for some years excited his anxious attention, and he was happy to say he had reason to think that the dangers which menaced the peace of Europe would be averted, and that in maintaining it France would join the other powers. The address was agreed to without a division.

In the House of Commons the address was moved by Lord Brabazon, and seconded by Mr. Grantley Berkeley, who spoke in the most eulogistic terms of the policy of the Government. Mr. Grote characterised the royal speech as not very rich in promises, presenting the sketch of a session as blank in prospect as the preceding session had been in reality. He condemned the Syrian expedition as indefensible on any correct view of international obligation. He trusted that we might escape the terrible calamity of a European war, but omens and menaces of warlike preparations were abroad, and the rumours of all Europe being placed on enlarged military establishments were in themselves no slight evil. Lord Palmerston, in settling the Eastern question, had unsettled all the relations of Europe. With regard to the Turkish empire Mr. Grote protested against our undertaking to maintain the integrity of that empire—"against spending the blood and treasure of the English

people in providing factitious cement for that disorderly mass to which for ages nature has denied cohesion. If," continued the honourable member, "in respect to our internal affairs we are destined to obtain no further progress or improvement—if the cold shadows of finality have at length closed around us, and intercepted all visions of a brighter future; if the glowing hopes once associated with a Reform Ministry and a Reform Parliament have perished like an exploded bubble—at least in regard to our foreign affairs, let us preserve from shipwreck that which is the first of all blessings and necessities—that which was bequeathed to us by the anti-reform ministry and the unreformed Parliament—peace and accord with the leading nations of Europe generally, but especially with our nearest and greatest neighbour, France."

This speech called up Lord John Russell, who entered into an elaborate vindication of the policy of the Government which had been so vigorously assailed, and a full discussion of the Eastern question. With regard to the charge of "finality," he explained that he held that a continual progress in improvement had been made in commercial affairs, and in the political institutions of the country; that continual progress and improvement were the principles by which he and the Government would be anxious to abide; but while he would not mistake abuses for institutions, so, on the other hand, he would not mistake institutions for abuses, and attack them as if they were such. He wished not to undertake any reform, though called improvement, which might be incompatible with those institutions; he wished to maintain the Established Church, the hereditary House of Lords, and the hereditary monarchy. If any plans should be brought forward which, as he thought, tended to the establishment of a republic, to overturn the Church, or to destroy the hereditary peerage, he should oppose them; but it was not just to contend that resistance to dangerous innovations of that kind was a resistance to all improvement. Mr. Hume considered the policy of the Government to be not only bad but wicked; for it carried desolation and ruin into the Syrian provinces, and for no purpose that he knew of connected with the interests of England. He therefore proposed an amendment condemning the war with Syria, and the expense occasioned by it, deploring the rupture with France, and regretting that the attention of Parliament had not been directed to the state of the revenue and the distress and discontent of the labouring classes.

Sir Robert Peel next addressed the House, reviewing the conduct of the Government on the Syrian question, and charging them with want of candour in dealing with France on the subject. The debate then terminated, Mr. Hume having withdrawn his motion.

On bringing up the report on the address, however, Sir R. Inglis called the attention of the Government to the recent alarming agitations of the Repeal question in Ireland, and to the inflammatory language held by Mr. O'Connell on the subject. Meetings had been held in some of the principal towns of Ireland, at which he said hundreds of thousands attended. He wished to know whether

Lord John Russell had adopted the alternative placed before him by Mr. O'Connell to be either a Conservative or a Repealer. The noble lord replied, that he did not accept the dictum of the honourable member for Dublin, nor feel bound to his alternative of Conservatism or Repeal.

On the 4th of February, in the House of Lords, the Earl of Minto moved the thanks of the House to Admiral Sir Robert Stopford, G.C.B., and the officers and men under his command in the late operations on the coast of Syria. The Duke of Wellington, in terms of the most earnest and cordial nature, expressed his

character formed and exalted by the institutions of a great and free country, and combining in a remarkable degree the qualities of valour and of prudence. Lord Stanley seconded the motion, which was warmly supported by several other Conservative members. On the 6th of April a letter from Sir Robert Stopford, acknowledging in suitable terms the vote of thanks, was read by the Speaker, and entered on the journals.

Acre, a celebrated city in ancient times, called Ptolemais, from Ptolemy, king of Egypt, was a strongly fortified sea-port, called St. Jean D'Acre by the Knights of Jerusalem. No town has suffered more from political



SIR W. W. FOLLETT.

admiration of the services performed by those engaged in the glorious expedition under discussion. He considered the capture of Acre one of the greatest deeds of modern times; but he thought it his duty to warn their lordships that they must not always expect that ships, however well commanded, or however gallant their seamen might be, would be capable of engaging successfully with stone walls.

The vote was carried unanimously, and the next day Lord John Russell moved a similar vote of thanks in the Commons. He wished to observe that the successful result of the operations was owing in a great degree to the character of the men who had directed them—a

revolution and the calamities of war. It was contended for as a great prize by all the successive conquerors of the East. It was possessed by the rulers of Egypt, by the Romans, the Saracens, the Christian Crusaders, and finally by the Turks. In the time of the Crusaders, it was populous and wealthy, containing numerous churches, convents, and hospitals, of which no traces now remain. In 1796 the Turks, animated by the example of Sir Sidney Smith, defended it successfully against a siege of sixty-one days by Napoleon. It was besieged by Ibrahim Pasha in the winter of 1831-32, during five months and twenty-one days, when nearly all its public and private buildings were destroyed. Its

fortifications were subsequently repaired and improved by the Pasha of Egypt, but it could not stand long before the fire of British ships. On the 3rd of November, 1840, it was stormed by our fleet under Sir Robert Stopford, and reduced to ruin after a bombardment of a few hours, the Egyptians losing upwards of 2,000 in killed and wounded, and 3,000 prisoners, while the British had but 12 killed and 42 wounded. The town is situated at the extremity of a plain on the edge of the sea-shore, and at the point of a bay formed by the promontory of Mount Carmel on the south-east, and the termination of the plain on the north-east.

On the 6th of December the admiral transmitted to Mehemet Ali, the official authority from the British Government, in the name of the four Powers—England, France, Russia, and Austria—to maintain His Highness in the Pashalic of Egypt, upon the condition that, within three days after communication made to him by Captain Fanshaw, he would agree to restore the Turkish fleet to the Sultan, and evacuate Syria. The Pasha, in reply to this, expressed his sense of the forbearance shown to him, and said that he was anxious to act in the manner pointed out to him in the despatch. At the same time, he enclosed a communication addressed by him to the Grand Vizier, in which he professed his entire submission to the allies in the following terms:—"Always disposed to make the sacrifice of all that I possess, and of my life itself, in order that I may obtain the good graces of His Highness, and recognising that by the intervention of the allied powers the favour of my sovereign is restored to me, I have made the necessary dispositions, in order that the Ottoman fleet may be given up to such person, and in such manner, as it will please His Highness to order. The troops that were in Candia, in Arabia, and in the Holy Cities, are ready to retire; and their evacuation will take place without delay, as soon as the order of my Sovereign shall have reached me. As to Syria and Adama, I have learned, by a letter from Ibrahim Pasha, dated the last days of the Ramadan, and which came to my hands overland, that he had quitted Damascus on the 3rd or 4th of Cheval, with all the army, for the purpose of returning into Egypt. Syria is, consequently, wholly evacuated, and my act of obedience is thus accomplished. These facts coming to the knowledge of your Excellency, I hope that, in communicating them to our Sovereign and master, you will intercede with His Highness that he will restore to his confidence the oldest and most faithful of his servants."

The long-agitated question of the East was thus rapidly approaching a settlement; and on the 11th of January, 1841, Mehemet Ali gave up the whole of the Turkish fleet, which sailed away for Marmorice, under the command of the Turkish admiral, Walker; and about the same time a firman was sent from Constantinople, whereby the Sultan accorded to the Pasha the hereditary possession of Egypt.

It is scarcely possible to conceive a worse government than that which was restored by our arms in Syria. The public officers were supplied from Constan-

tinople. Their general character was duplicity and venality of the grossest kind, while the characteristics of the Government were feebleness, irresolution, inactivity, faithlessness, and poverty. All over the country, access to the pashas, and a favourable decision on matters brought before them, were only obtainable by presents of money. The Custom House officers were regularly bribed to allow goods to pass at lower rates than the tariff, or without entering the Custom House at all. In the courts of justice decisions were openly bought, and no man who was not prepared to purchase the Cadi's favour need go there. In cases where disputes were carried to the pashas by the English and other consuls, the most profligate violation of promises and rights was made without shame or fear. The natural consequences were—insecurity of life and property, universal discontent, and contempt of the Government. The English occupation gave some relief while it lasted; and the common salutation addressed to an Englishman by a native on the road was, "May God send more of you!"

To return to events at home. The powers of the English Poor Law Commissioners, which had been limited to a period of five years, now expired. Accordingly, on the 29th of January, Lord John Russell moved in the House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill to continue the Poor Law Commission for a time, and for the further amendment of the laws relating to the poor in England. The discontent felt by the opponents of the measure was fanned into a flame by a portion of the press, which published every case of alleged mismanagement on the part of those invested with authority under the act, in order to prevent the renewal of the powers of the Commission. Mr. Wakley denounced the principle of the act as harsh and tyrannical, and the Commission as both expensive and useless. He was surprised that a ministry calling itself reformed should propose the re-enactment of such a law, after the experience they had had of its pernicious and most cruel working. The middle classes considered that the workhouse had been made a place of torture instead of protection, with a view to deter the poor from asking any assistance. Among the poor, the abhorrence of the only species of relief the law allowed was still more strong. He knew instances in which they preferred death from starvation to relief in the workhouse, coupled with the condition of being separated from their children. Sir Francis Burdett believed that the system could never be made palatable to the people of England. Men who loved public liberty could never be reconciled to the tribunal of Somerset House, and he hoped that that, at all events, would be abolished. Mr. Hume, on the other hand, maintained that great benefits had been conferred by the law, and the House ought to do their best to make it still more useful. Leave was given to bring in the bill, but on the second reading being moved, a long and important debate took place. Mr. Disraeli said that it was impossible to conceive any resolution more deeply affecting the happiness of the people than the Poor Law. He was persuaded that the measure had produced much

disaffection, and he moved the second reading that day six months. Mr. Wakley seconded the amendment. The principle of this act, he said, "was a base and ferocious one, tending to stimulate the bone and muscle of this country to forcible resistance." Whatever the cruelties of oppression committed in the poor-house, the pauper had no appeal, no redress—he could not go out to complain. Mr. G. Knight remarked that it was an easy road to popularity to inveigh against the Poor Law. The enemies of the poor were not those who sought to raise their wages and improve their habits, but those who deluded them with a false sympathy. Mr. Muntz disliked the law because it made no distinction between the respectable and the dissolute poor. Sir Robert Peel observed that they were too apt to forget the past evils, and to dwell only on the present. They forgot how the old system had demoralised the labouring classes. He was for the continuance of the present act; but he hoped the law would not be executed with strict rigidity, and that in matters of feeling, such as churchyard burials, there would be a due deference to the material sentiments and wishes of the people. Mr. Fox Maule held that a central management was necessary, because so little were the boards of guardians fitted for the uncontrolled exercise of their duties, that there was hardly any abuse of the old system of which some one or other of those boards had not solicited the restoration. Viscount Howick believed that the act of 1834 was one of the most beneficial measures ever passed, and he rejoiced that no one had gone so far as to propose the restoration of the old system. Out-door relief, given under pressure, would be an example detrimental to the formation of provident habits. It had been objected that men would endure much suffering rather than enter the workhouse—that was the very thing desired. It threw them on their own efforts and the efforts of their friends. It was only on the abandonment of those efforts under the old system that the character and condition of the English peasantry declined. Lord John Russell answered the various arguments which had been brought forward against the measure, and entreated the House not to admit the recurrence of so injurious a state of things as that which existed under the old law, nor to seek popularity by undermining the independence of the labourers. The term of ten years for the continuance of the Commission was considered too long, and five years were proposed instead. The bill, however, was carried by a majority of 147; the numbers being—ayes, 201; noes, 54. The principle of the measure was thus affirmed by a very large majority; but the subsequent discussions upon the several clauses occupied a large portion of the time of the House during the session.

Notwithstanding what had been said in Parliament to show that the poor law was not condemned by public opinion, or that it was not unpopular with the middle and working classes, a remarkable proof of the contrary was given in the month of April at Nottingham. That borough had always been a stronghold of the Liberal party, and without some extraordinary excitement there would have been very little chance for a Conservative

candidate. Mr. Walter, however—formerly M.P. for Berkshire, and well known as a principal proprietor of the *Times*—announced himself as a candidate, in opposition to Mr. Larpent. The politics of Mr. Walter were then strongly Conservative, but he took his stand boldly upon the ground of an uncompromising hostility to the new Poor Law. All other differences being merged in sympathy with him upon this question, he carried the election by a majority of 238—a result which produced quite a sensation throughout the country.

The Annual Report of the Irish Poor Law for this year showed that the total number of unions organised up to that time was 127, leaving only three to be formed, which would make the total number required. Fourteen of the workhouses had been completed. There had been an inquiry about the alleged falsification of certain returns from the offices of the Poor Law Commissioners in Ireland. The result was to fix the blame upon the Secretary of the Commissioners, but as he had resigned his office in consequence, it was stated, of ill-health, the House of Lords, which had taken up the matter, agreed to waive further proceedings against him.

The re-introduction by Lord Stanley of his bill to regulate the registration of voters in Ireland, led to much angry discussion, especially between the noble lord and Mr. O'Connell, who moved an amendment, which was rejected by a majority of 190. But two days after, Lord Morpeth brought in a Government bill for the same object. The main features of the plan were to abolish certificates; to make the register conclusive of the right to vote, except where disqualification subsequently appeared; to establish an annual revision of the registers, and to give a right of appeal equally to the claimant and the objector. The main point of difference between this and Lord Stanley's bill consisted in the tribunal to which the appeal was to be made. The Government proposed for this purpose the creation of a new court, consisting of three barristers of a certain standing. An additional feature of the Government bill was a proposal to settle the question of the basis of the franchise by fixing upon the Poor Law valuation as the standard; and the bill proposed to enact that every occupier of a tenement, under a holding of not less than fourteen years, of the annual value of £5, should have the right of voting previously enjoyed by persons who had a beneficial interest of £10. The Conservatives complained of the unfairness of thus introducing by surprise a fundamental alteration in the elective franchise of Ireland, founded upon principles unknown both in England and Scotland. It was represented as a new Reform Bill for Ireland, tacked on as a postscript to a bill for amending the registration. The £5 franchise, it was argued, would in effect be little short of the introduction of universal suffrage. On account of this addition Lord Stanley strongly opposed the second reading. Not the least objection to the bill was the circumstance that it had been introduced under false colours and under false pretences. He saw in it another step in that line of policy so peculiar to the present administration, which they had pursued from the first moment of their existence until now, not

with a view of achieving any practical result, but for the sake of enabling themselves to maintain for a few years a struggling existence, and delude a portion of their supporters with a plausible semblance of concession.

Lord Stanley's dissection of the measure, and his review of the political state of Ireland, which were very lengthened, and distinguished by remarkable ability, were calculated to produce a strong impression on the House. He was therefore answered by the chief secretary, Lord Morpeth. The clause which was called a postscript he regarded as the preface, or rather as the main portion of the text itself, without which the rest would have no chance of being brought to a satisfactory issue. Ministers were taunted with an excessive partiality to Ireland; but it should be recollected that the forty-shilling freeholders which existed in England had been disfranchised in Ireland to the number of 191,000. All the litigation in the registration courts, or before committees of the House, now turned upon questions of value; and the Irish judges themselves were divided in opinion as to the correct interpretation of the law, so that one interpretation would restrict the franchise materially, while another enlarged it. The Government were satisfied that even a £5 rating would exclude many voters of the class which the former act was intended to admit. He trusted that the House, acting in the spirit of that measure, would guard the honest voter against many difficulties devised by Lord Stanley; and that they would give the preference to a measure conciliatory to the great body of their Irish fellow-subjects. The debate was adjourned.

On the second night it was carried on with much spirit. Lord Howick approved of the principle of adopting the Poor Law rating as a test of value. He adverted to the progressive diminution of voters in Ireland, in consequence of the system which the landlords pursued of refusing to renew leases; and he thought the number would be still further reduced by Lord Stanley's bill. Mr. C. Buller asserted that the object of the opposite party was to re-establish the old Orange ascendancy; and he called forth expressions of disapprobation by advising the House to look not only to the strength and temper of the Irish people, but also to the critical state of our foreign relations. This, he said, was delicate ground to touch upon, but it should be remembered that all the great political acquisitions of Ireland had been made at such critical times. Mr. Macaulay next addressed the House, and the debate was again adjourned.

Mr. Serjeant Jackson, Mr. Thesiger, Mr. Milnes, and Sir James Graham spoke strongly against the bill, and the Government which introduced it, following Lord Stanley in attacking them for their Irish policy, and especially for their Irish appointments. Sir James Graham said that thirty-eight persons who had voted for repeal in 1834 had been since promoted. First on the list was Mr. Fitzsimon, a near relative of Mr. O'Connell, appointed to be clerk of the Hanaper; next Mr. Kennedy, now a slave commissioner at the Havannah; next Mr. Lynch, now a master in Chancery; then Mr. Maurice O'Connell, placed over the Registry Office in Dublin; Sir David Roche, made a baronet; and Mr. O'Connell himself, offered

the office of chief baron in Ireland. Mr. Sheil replied to Sir James Graham, after which the debate was adjourned the third time. On the fourth night Mr. O'Connell delivered a vehement speech, in which he alluded to the danger of a foreign war so long as Ireland continued dissatisfied.

Sir R. Peel rebuked Mr. O'Connell for dwelling on the old animosities between England and Ireland, and declared that it was a libel on the Irish people to say that they would not join England in resistance to a foreign enemy. Referring to the policy of Lord Melbourne's Government, Sir Robert Peel said he could not help thinking, that when the noble lord recalled to mind the declarations of 1834 and 1837, it would abate something of the feeling of satisfaction with which he contemplated his temporary triumph over the pressure of immediate difficulties. Something of dissatisfaction in reflecting on the small majority he might bring to his aid to-night must cast a gloom over the festivities with which, perhaps, he might celebrate the new compact and the new alliance, when the mortifying regret came across him that he had gained that support by receding from the position which had enabled him to arrest the progress of democratic principles, by stopping the progress of social improvement in Ireland, by encouraging hopes in this country, by rousing passions, and by exciting expectations which he could not disappoint without being the object of indignation, and which he could not gratify without being the fomentor of convulsion.

After an effective reply from Lord John Russell, the House divided on the respective merits of the rival bills, when the Government measure was carried by a majority of five. The result was hailed with cheers from both sides of the House, the Opposition regarding the victory as little better than a defeat. Lord John Russell at first announced that he would proceed immediately with the measure, but he afterwards moved its postponement till the 23rd of April. Then Lord Stanley, amidst the vehement cheers of his party, declared that he would take the sense of the House upon the £5 rating.

In Ireland the followers of Mr. O'Connell regarded the postponement of Lord Morpeth's bill till after the Easter recess as a piece of *finesse* to foil Lord Stanley's measure, and get rid of an unpleasant subject. The repealers argued there was no use in hanging back any longer, that there was nothing to be hoped for from English justice, and that they must put forth all their energies to obtain an Irish Parliament. Mr. John O'Connell, at a public meeting, exclaimed—"Let the English choose between these two bills; let them confer the blessings of Lord Morpeth's bill, or inflict the deep, determined curse of which Lord Stanley's bill would be the source. Let England now do justice to Ireland, or, so sure as to-morrow's sun will rise, Ireland will yet refuse her assistance in the hour of need."

There was a vital principle at issue between Lord Stanley and the Government on the subject of the franchise. The bill of the former was based upon the principle that the tenant should have an interest in his holding above the rent. This would place the franchise altogether at the mercy of the landlords, the rents in

Ireland being generally equal to the full value of the land, if not more, and the franchise being connected with leases which the landlords were at liberty to give or to withhold, and which they would not give unless to tenants upon whose political support they could rely. This fact was proved by the gradual diminution of the constituency arising from this cause. The principle of the Government bill, on the other hand, was to make the franchise dependent upon a certain amount of rating for the support of the poor, which was based upon the real value of the land, and upon occupation independently of leases.

When the question was introduced again, on the 26th of April, it gave rise to a party debate. While the House was in committee on Lord Morpeth's bill, Lord Howick proposed an amendment to the effect that the tenant, in order to entitle him to the franchise, should have a beneficial interest in his holding of £5 a-year over and above the rent. Lord Morpeth proposed as a qualification for the franchise a lease of fourteen years, and a low rating of £8. Lord Howick proposed that the yearly tenant should be entitled to vote as well as the leaseholder if he had an annual interest of £5 in it; but Lord Morpeth contended, and showed from statistics, that this principle would disfranchise more than three-fourths of the £10 tenant voters in several of the counties. In short, it would have the effect of almost entirely disfranchising the existing occupying constituency of Ireland. As the law stood, the Irish electors were being diminished at the rate of 5,000 a-year; and Mr. O'Connell affirmed that the county constituency had decreased to the number of 20,000 since the Reform Act passed. Lord Stanley and Sir Robert Peel declared that they would vote for the principle of Lord Howick's amendment.

Sir Robert, however, said that the question before the House was of another kind. It was not whether the franchise should be co-extensive with the population; the question which arose was this, whether Her Majesty's Government had made a provision on the subject which entitled them to the confidence of the House? and he must say that the course they had pursued on the Irish franchise appeared to him to disentitle them to the confidence of the House and the country. This statement was received with vehement cheering by the Opposition.

On a division, Lord Howick's amendment was carried by 291 to 270. Lord Howick subsequently stated that he meant his clause to be merely an addition to some other franchise which would secure a large constituency. And Lord Morpeth explained that Lord Howick's argument in favour of a £5 beneficial interest had not been resisted by the Government as an addition to their £8 qualification, but as a substitution for it; and on this £8 qualification they were determined to take the opinion of the House. After much discussion, and considerable confusion, the House came to the point of real interest—namely, the division, which was supposed to involve the fate of the Government, and was, therefore, anticipated with intense eagerness and anxiety. The numbers were found to be—for the main clause of the Govern-

ment bill, an £8 rating, 289; against it, 300; majority against the Government, 11.

Sir Robert Peel observed that to conciliate one or two individual members the Government had raised the rating test of franchise from £5 to £8—a change which, judging by returns from thirty-one unions, swept away 76,000 out of the proposed constituency of 103,000. Such uncalled-for concessions, he said, must destroy all confidence in the adherence of a Government even to its own propositions. At the conclusion of this speech a great majority of the members quitted the House, leaving a comparatively small audience to Lord Howick, who briefly attempted to justify his own course. Lord Stanley said a few words, and the Chairman left the chair. Thus ended the great party struggle of the session. A vast deal of time was wasted in party debates and fruitless discussions, and the proposal to give the Irish people the benefit of the Reform Act by putting its perishing constituencies on a proper basis, simple as it may seem, utterly failed. Lord Stanley also abandoned his measure, and there the matter ended. The whole of the proceedings plainly indicated that the doom of Lord Melbourne's feeble Cabinet was at hand.

A movement was made in Parliament during the present session to place the Jews on a level with their fellow-subjects in respect to their civil rights. Up to this time they were excluded by law not only from seats in Parliament, but from the magistracy and town-councils, as no one could enter these bodies without taking the oath of allegiance, "on the true faith of a Christian," which of course could not be done conscientiously by Jews. This small but valuable class of the community bore their exclusion quietly, and the question of Jewish Emancipation excited but little attention. Mr. Divett, one of the members for Exeter, brought in a bill the object of which was to do away with the declaration required by the Municipal Corporations Act, from all persons taking corporate offices, by reason of which the members of the Jewish persuasion were debarred from holding civil magistracies. It was opposed on the second reading by Sir Robert Inglis, who earnestly protested against surrendering the principle of the constitution, by which all civil authority had been confined to the professors of Christianity. Lord John Russell supported the bill, and said he was willing to go further, and admit Jews to Parliament, should they demand that concession. On a division, the second reading of the bill was carried in a thin House, by a majority of 113, only 24 members voting in a minority. The principle of the bill was again discussed on the third reading, when a debate occurred which was remarkably interesting, on account of masterly speeches by two of the greatest orators of their time, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Macaulay.

Mr. Gladstone argued that it was not possible to draw a line between a bill to admit Jews to municipal offices and one to permit them to hold other offices, including seats in Parliament. To this he objected, on the following grounds: the Jew's profession was in itself a disqualification for legislative offices in a

Christian country; Christianity was part and parcel of the law of England; our laws were modelled on the principles of Christianity. The proceedings in both Houses of Parliament were commenced by the solemn invocation of the Almighty, and the object set before them was the promotion of true religion and the glory of God. The question, then, really was, would they destroy the distinctive Christianity of the constitution? The test for office was at present a Christian test, and this the bill went to annul. He did not know whether he was not rendering himself liable to the charge of sheer intolerance; but the ground he occupied was precisely the same as if he were discussing a purely civil question. Let him guard himself in speaking of the Jews as a body. Who could doubt there were many honest, zealous-minded men amongst them? The stronger, therefore, was the objection to investing them with the privilege of legislating for Christians. There were many Jews, doubtless, who would discharge those duties well; but still it was the duty of the State to choose those who, as a class, were most competent for the duties to which they were appointed. Now, he did not see how it could be held that the Jews possessed the necessary qualifications. Mr. Gladstone here called attention to the great number of questions essentially connected with the highest Christian considerations which had come before the House during the last ten years. For instance, in England, the question of church-rates, church extension; national education in Scotland, and the Established Church in Ireland. Such questions were always arising. These were the questions the most difficult to adjust, the most impossible to agree upon, and the most prolific of agitation in the country. If Christianity were a great pervading principle of our law, if most great questions were intimately associated with that principle, then those who rejected Christianity were not competent to enter on those subjects. The proposition was very different from that on which the claims of Roman Catholics and Dissenters were founded. With them we had the common bonds of belief in the same redemption. There were also considerations which broadly distinguished the case from that of the Jews. The one adhered as strongly as ourselves to the text of Christianity; the other did not: the one constituted a large majority in one portion of the United Kingdom; the other was scarcely perceptible on the face of English society. So much as to numbers; now as to grievances. He was not aware that the Jews had any special grievances to complain of. No allegation of this kind had ever been made. It was to be borne in mind that there were still some offices to which the religious test was strictly applied—to the holder of the crown, to the Lord Chancellor, and to certain great offices in Ireland. To his mind, the constitution would be much better preserved by limiting the power of holding office to Christians, than by admitting Jews. The time might come when the Parliament of England would be called upon to exercise functions still more directly ecclesiastical. He admitted that the present House was, to a certain extent, disqualified for discussing such

questions as these. He did not complain of this change. The time might come when the admixture of creeds amongst them would be so strange that it would be an insult to public opinion to think of discharging ecclesiastical functions. In introducing these men, therefore, to Parliament, and to other high offices, there existed an absolute tendency to disqualify Parliament for the performance of any duties connected with religion, and, by easy transitions, to overturn the very principle on which the constitution of this nation is based.

This speech was answered by Mr. Macaulay, who said that, leaving the question of religious toleration in general, he intended to confine himself to the positions advanced by Mr. Gladstone. On the ground that the bill relieving the Jews from all political disabilities would render them at some future time eligible to seats in Parliament, it had been said that those disabilities should not be removed. This argument was not a fair one. He had listened to the speech of the honourable member for Newark, and could discover no arguments which might not, with great facility, be applied to the members of that House. Who was to decide on points of faith? to say which was the true religion? The honourable member had mistaken the object of the bill. It was not to admit Jews into the House. The case of our excluding Roman Catholics from the throne, which had been alluded to, was a different one. Mr. Macaulay compared the treatment of the Jews with that of Roman Catholics and Dissenters, and held that the former was much worse, as, if carried out, it would lead to actual and open persecution. He thought their exclusion from civil offices a practical grievance, of which they had a just right to complain. The Roman Catholics amount to six or seven millions. It was found impossible to resist the determination of disaffected millions. But it was said the Jews were insignificant in point of number—that there was no need to fear a revolution in Petticoat Lane. If they were so insignificant a sect, why refuse to remove their disabilities? He apprehended no danger from it; the Jews were not a proselytising people; and they had seen how little influence articles of faith had in binding the ingenuity of certain casuists. He should be glad if those of Oxford would instruct the Jews in some of their ingenuity, and then he had no doubt they would make any declaration required of them. He did not believe that, after removing the disabilities of the Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters, the House would be guilty of so great an injustice as to refuse the same boon to that portion of Her Majesty's subjects which belonged to the Jewish persuasion.

The third reading was carried by a majority of 77; the numbers being, ayes, 108; noes, 31. The bill passed through the House of Lords as far as the third reading; but at that stage it was thrown out by a majority of 34.

Another matter involving the principles of religious liberty was, on the 1st of May, introduced by the Duke of Argyll, who took up the question of nonintrusion in the Church of Scotland. In an able speech he reviewed the various acts of the legislature on the

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rights of patronage in that Church. The object of his bill was to give effect to the principle of non-intrusion, by legalising the right of the congregation to dissent from the appointment of any presentee who might be sent to them by the patron. He was convinced that unless some measure to this effect was passed, the most lamentable consequences to the Church of Scotland would ensue, and there could be no doubt that a secession of a large number from the Church would take place; while, if the principle of non-intrusion were conceded, the surest means would be adopted to put an end to the agitation of those who were opposed to patronage altogether. He therefore earnestly appealed to their lordships to settle the question. The bill was resisted by the Earl of Aberdeen, Lord Dunfermline, and Lord Haddington. The bill was read a first time, and the second reading was postponed till after the meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in which the question was debated amidst scenes of the greatest popular excitement.

A presentee named Edwards being refused ordination by the presbytery of Strathbogie, appealed to the civil court, and gained a verdict; whereupon seven ministers of the presbytery united in ordaining him, contrary to the principle of the Veto Act, which had been adopted by the Church of Scotland in 1834. Dr. Chalmers, in consequence, moved their deposition from the ministry, contending that they had committed an enormous offence against the rights and authority of the Church. "The Church of Scotland," he exclaimed, "can never give way, and will sooner give up her existence as an establishment, than give up her powers as a self-acting and self-regulating body, to do what in her judgment is best for the honour of the Redeemer, and the interest of his kingdom upon earth. We can see no other alternative; if these men do not humble themselves, their deposition is inevitable. The Church of Scotland cannot tolerate, and what is more, it cannot survive the scandal of quietly putting up with a delinquency so enormous as that into which these brethren have fallen." Dr. Cooke, the leader of what was called the moderate party in the Church of Scotland, proposed a counter resolution, to confirm the seven ministers in their offices. After a long debate the motion for deposition was carried by a majority of 97. The seven parishes were then declared vacant, and Mr. Edwards was deprived of his license as a minister. The deposed ministers next petitioned the House of Lords. This petition was presented by Lord Aberdeen, who said, that as they were suffering for simply obeying the law, the Government was bound to protect them. Lords Haddington, Normanby, and Brougham argued that the law should be enforced, and that the civil power should not yield to ecclesiastical pretensions. The petition was laid on the table, and there the matter ended for the present. Parliament having declined to interfere, the consequences which have been already recorded took place, namely, the secession of a very large number of ministers and people from the Establishment, and the foundation of the "Free Church of Scotland."

On the 31st of May, pursuant to notice, Sir Robert Peel brought forward a motion of want of confidence in the Government, in the following words:—"That Her Majesty's Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the House measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare; and that their continuance in office under such circumstances is at variance with the spirit of the constitution." The right hon. baronet referred to a number of precedents for the course he adopted—namely, the cases of Sir Robert Walpole, Lord North, Mr. Pitt, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Liverpool, the Duke of Wellington, and himself, each of whom resigned, failing the support of a majority of the House of Commons; and he insisted that Lord Melbourne was bound to follow their example. A debate of two nights followed: it was interrupted by the Whitsun holidays, after which it was resumed and lasted three nights more, during which all sorts of topics were discussed, and all the shortcomings of Ministers were dwelt upon, and urged against them with great earnestness. The burden of the charges against them was, that they were causing the greatest public mischief, by leaving important questions in doubt, setting party against party, and stirring society to its very foundations. At length the House went to a division, when there appeared for Sir R. Peel's motion, 312; against it, 311, giving a majority of 1 against the Government. The total number of members in the House of Commons was 658. On this occasion 623 actually voted—a proof of the intense interest excited by the contest. At the meeting of the House on the following Monday, the most lively anxiety was manifested as to the course Ministers would pursue. Lord John Russell stated that, after the late division, he felt that in that House of Commons the Government could expect no further majorities, and that they were resolved to appeal to the country. The session had now lost its interest; but it lingered on for another fortnight, in order to get through the necessary business.

On the 22nd of June the Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person, when she stated that she had come to the determination of proroguing Parliament, with a view to its immediate dissolution; that the paramount importance of the trade and industry of the country, and her anxiety that the exigencies of the public service should be provided for, in the manner least burdensome to the community, had induced her to resort to the means which the constitution had entrusted to her, of ascertaining the sense of her people upon matters which so deeply concern their welfare. The Lord Chancellor then declared Parliament prorogued till Tuesday, 29th of June, and on the following day a proclamation appeared declaring Parliament dissolved.

Ever since the re-construction of the Melbourne Cabinet, and the repulse of Sir Robert Peel by the Court, the Conservative party had been daily gaining strength under the skilful management of its chief. Its ranks had been recruited by a large accession of earnest men, who, though they had been Reformers, and had identified

themselves with the Liberal cause, had now arrived at the conclusion that the exigencies of the country and the progress of practical improvement required a strong Government. They believed that Sir Robert Peel was the man for the time, that he alone could overcome the *vis inertiae* of the House of Lords, and that, aided by the vast moral influence of the Duke of Wellington, he would be able to carry measures of real amendment. Even those who were doubtful as to the future policy of a Conservative Ministry were disposed to give them a fair trial, hoping that after such a long exclusion from office, they would make extraordinary efforts to win the confidence of the country. They had great reliance on the liberal tendencies of Sir Robert Peel's mind, which had been proved on several occasions, and they were not without hope that he would do for the laws which excluded corn from the country what he had done for the laws that excluded Roman Catholics from Parliament.

On the other hand, earnest Liberals had lost faith in the Whigs, who had never possessed the confidence of the Church, and had now excited the distrust and dislike of the farmers, from the intimations they had given that they were disposed to surrender the citadel of protection. Besides, they had been vacillating and uncertain in their policy—wanting strength of will and steadiness of purpose, without which no political leaders can command respect; and instead of taking their stand upon broad principles and carrying them out, they were continually shifting their ground, and having recourse to temporary expedients. It was under these circumstances and in this state of parties that Lord Melbourne resolved to appeal to the country. In doing so, his supporters, it is true, promised that when reinvigorated by an accession of strength at a general election, he would do much better for the future. But it was in vain that they represented that the Ministry had fallen a victim to class interests and monopoly; in vain they published the most attractive programme of future measures: the electors were determined to have a change.

The city of London exhibited a most remarkable defection from the Whigs on this occasion. It had returned four Liberals to the late Parliament, one of whom was Lord John Russell himself. On this occasion they returned two Conservatives and two Liberals; Mr. Masterman, a Conservative, being at the head of the poll. Lord John Russell was also returned, having beaten his Conservative opponent by a majority of only 7. Another significant triumph of the Conservatives was one in the West Riding of Yorkshire, one of the most liberal constituencies in the kingdom. There Lord Morpeth and Lord Milton—the candidates, of all others, most likely to succeed—were beaten, after a tremendous contest, by the Hon. S. Wortley and Mr. Denison. For Dublin, also, two Conservatives were returned—Messrs. West and Grogan; Mr. O'Connell being defeated. The general results took the public by surprise. In England and Wales the Conservatives had a majority of 104. In Scotland the Liberals had a

majority of 9, and in Ireland of 19. The majority in favour of the Conservatives in the United Kingdom was 76. The two cries which had most to do in producing this result were, on the one side, "cheap bread," and on the other, "low wages."

On the 19th of August the new Parliament assembled. The session was opened by commission; the royal speech, which was read by the Lord Chancellor, contained a paragraph referring to the duties affecting the productions of foreign countries, and suggesting for consideration the question whether the principle of protection was not carried to an extent injurious alike to the income of the State and the interests of the people; whether the corn laws did not aggravate the natural fluctuations of supply; and whether they did not embarrass trade, derange the currency, and by their operation diminish the comfort and increase the privations of the great body of the community. Here was a distinct enunciation of the principles of free trade in the speech from the throne, for which, of course, the Ministers were responsible. The address in the House of Lords was moved by Earl Spencer, a decided free trader, and seconded by the Marquis of Clanricarde. The political war now commenced in earnest.

The Earl of Ripon moved an amendment to the effect that the Government did not possess the confidence of the country. He proposed that an address be presented to Her Majesty, expressing the concern of the House that for some years the public expenditure had exceeded the annual income; and that in order to remedy this, and to deal in a satisfactory manner with the matters referred to in the royal speech, it was essential that Her Majesty's Government should possess the confidence of that House and of the country—a confidence which was not reposed in Her Majesty's present advisers. Lord Ripon delivered a long and elaborate speech in support of his amendment, which evidently took the Prime Minister by surprise.

Lord Melbourne, in replying, said: "The nature of this motion, and the circumstances under which it has been made—notwithstanding its great importance, the arguments on which it has been founded, and the fair, candid, clear, and distinct spirit in which it has been submitted—do not make it necessary for me to trouble your lordships with many observations. I listened to my noble friend who moved the amendment with great deference for his abilities, with great deference for his information, and with great respect for his candour; and I must say that, seeing the superstructure he was about to raise, a more meagre, slender, and fragile foundation it would be impossible to lay down. The noble lord made a sort of *omnium gatherum* speech; impressed everything into his service, as well what we had done last year as during the present; and on such a collection of heterogeneous materials he founds a motion of this magnitude—a motion so important in its consequences, and one, allow me to say, perfectly new to this House. My lords, it came like a thunder clap upon me. I own I was ignorant that there existed in this House the spirit on

which that motion seems to proceed. We all know that there were a great many factious motions in the late House of Commons, and continual motions of want of confidence, but there was not the least intimation that your lordships sympathised with or countenanced any such proceedings. Your lordships were reposing a tranquil confidence in the present Government, when suddenly, on the grounds stated by the noble lord, unexpectedly, and contrary to all precedent, the noble lord has come forward with this distinct motion of want of confidence in Her Majesty's Ministers." The noble viscount then defended himself and colleagues from the charge of omission of various topics in the royal speech, and proceeded to the measures proposed in it for the relief of commercial depression.

Having delivered his opinion at length upon the Corn Laws, he proceeded thus:—"Of course, the meaning of the motion, in plain English, is just this: 'We have now a majority in the House of Commons.' I should suppose, if we are to go from speculations on the hustings, there is such a majority; but at the same time members are sent here *ad consultandum de rebus arduis regni*. We must not look merely to statements on the hustings, but to the conduct that is pursued where these matters are discussed in a more gentleman-like manner. I have, however, derived some degree of consolation and hope from the arguments by which the views of my opponents were supported at the hustings, and I feel quite certain that such is their sense of honour, candour, and justice, that they cannot persevere in the opinions they held there on such arguments." The noble viscount said, in conclusion, that he could only repeat, that considering the nature and object of this motion, as far as he could understand them, he looked on it as quite unprecedented, and that there certainly never was a motion supported on weaker grounds, or by more insufficient arguments.

The Duke of Wellington followed in a speech which was chiefly remarkable for the generous testimony he bore to the conduct of Lord Melbourne towards the Queen. The duke said—"He was willing to admit that the noble viscount had rendered the greatest possible service to Her Majesty, in making her acquainted with the mode and policy of the government of this country, initiating her into the laws and spirit of the constitution, independently of the performance of his duty as the servant of Her Majesty's Crown; teaching her, in short, to preside over the destiny of this great country." The Marquis of Downshire subsequently stated that he had listened with the greatest pleasure to the speech of the noble duke, "which did him the highest honour, and no part more so than that in which he had spoken of the services of a peculiar nature rendered by the present head of the Government to the young Sovereign of this country; and he was rejoiced that the recognition of those services went forth to the world stamped with the high authority of the noble duke." The House divided on the question, when there was a majority of 72 against the Government.

The first business in the House of Commons was the

re-election of Mr. Shaw Lefevre as Speaker. Several days were occupied in the swearing in of members. On the 24th of August the address was moved by Mr. Mark Philips, and seconded by Mr. John Dundas. Mr. Wortley then moved an amendment similar to the one which had been carried in the House of Lords, in which he went over all the charges against the Government. His motion was seconded by Lord Bruce, and supported by Mr. Disraeli. The debate lasted several nights. Sir Robert Peel delivered a long and very able speech, in which he reviewed the whole policy of the Government. He was answered by Lord John Russell, whose speech closed the debate. The division gave to Sir Robert Peel a majority, for which no one seemed prepared. The numbers were—for the Ministerial address, 269; for the amendment, 360; majority against the Government, 91.

This was decisive. There was nothing for Lord Melbourne but resignation. Accordingly, on the 30th of August, he rose in his place and said:—"My Lords,—I consider it my duty to acquaint your lordships, that in consequence of the vote which was come to by the other House of Parliament on Saturday morning last, which was precisely similar in terms to the vote come to by your lordships at an early period of the week, I have, on the part of my colleagues and myself, tendered to Her Majesty the resignation of the offices we hold; which resignation Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to accept, and we now continue to hold those offices only until our successors are appointed." The House received this announcement in perfect silence, and adjourned almost immediately afterwards. Lord John Russell made a similar statement in the House of Commons, but afterwards proceeded shortly to vindicate the course which had been recently pursued by the Government of which he was a member.

Sir Robert Peel was sent for. No difficulties were now raised about the ladies of the Court, and in due time the following administration was formed (the Duke of Wellington in the Cabinet, without any office):—First Lord of the Treasury, Sir Robert Peel; Lord Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst; Chancellor of the Exchequer, Right Hon. H. Goulburn; President of the Council, Lord Wharnccliffe; Privy Seal, Duke of Buckingham; Home Secretary, Sir J. Graham; Foreign Secretary, Earl of Aberdeen; Colonial Secretary, Lord Stanley; First Lord of the Admiralty, Earl of Haddington; President of the Board of Control, Lord Ellenborough; President of the Board of Trade, Earl of Ripon; Secretary at War, Sir H. Hardinge; Treasurer of the Navy and Paymaster of the Forces, Sir E. Knatchbull; Postmaster-General, Lord Lowther; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Lord G. Somerset; Woods and Forests, Earl of Lincoln; Master-General of the Ordnance, Sir G. Murray; Vice-President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint, W. E. Gladstone; Secretary to the Admiralty, Hon. Sidney Herbert; Joint Secretaries of the Treasury, Sir G. Clark and Sir T. Fremantle; Secretaries of the Board of Control, Hon. W. Baring and J. Emerson Tennent; Home Under-Secretary, Hon. C. M. Sutton; Foreign Under-Secretary, Lord Canning; Colonial

Under-Secretary, G. W. Hope; Lords of the Treasury, Alexander Pringle, H. Baring, J. Young, and J. Milne Gaskell; Lords of the Admiralty, Sir G. Cockburn, Admiral Sir W. Gage, Sir G. Seymour, Hon. Captain Gordon, and Hon. H. L. Corry; Storekeeper of the Ordnance, J. R. Bonham; Clerk of the Ordnance, Captain Boldero; Surveyor-General of the Ordnance, Colonel Jonathan Peel; Attorney-General, Sir F. Pollock; Solicitor-General, Sir W. W. Follett; Judge-Advocate, Dr. Nicholl; Lord-Advocate of Scotland, Sir W. Rae. Ireland—Lord-Lieutenant, Earl de Grey; Lord-Chancellor, Sir E. Sugden; Chief Secretary, Lord Elliot; Attorney-General, Mr. Blackburn, Q.C.; Solicitor-General, Serjeant Jackson.

The members of the Government were all re-elected, and the House of Commons again met on the 10th of September, when the new Premier announced the course he intended to pursue. Next day Lord John Russell expressed his views with regard to the great change in the position of parties, which had just been effected. This gave rise to another party debate. Sir Robert Peel replied to Lord John Russell. Lord Palmerston admonished the right honourable gentleman not to plume himself too confidently on his majority, for there was a country as well as a House of Lords. A desultory debate on the same subject took place on going into a committee of supply a few nights after, when there was a reiteration of the same topics on both sides, with the usual amount of recrimination. A similar debate occurred in the House of Lords—the chief subjects of discussion, which continually recurred, being the financial affairs of the country, and the Corn Laws. All the business of immediate urgency having been dispatched, both parties welcomed the day of prorogation, which took place on the 7th of October, the Lords Commissioners being the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Wellington, the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Shaftesbury, and Lord Wharcliffe. The Queen's speech announced the formation of the new administration, alluded to the equalisation of the public income and the annual expenditure, and other important objects connected with the trade and commerce of the country, which would necessarily occupy their attention at an early period of the recess, promising that she would give her cordial concurrence to all such measures as should appear, after mature consideration, best calculated to prevent the recurrence of distress in the manufacturing districts, and to promote the great object of Her Majesty's wishes—the happiness and contentment of all her people.

The necessity of the measures here alluded to mainly arose from the Anti-Corn-Law agitation; and the time has, therefore, now arrived for recording the events and incidents connected with this great national movement.

CHAPTER II.

History of Free Trade—Introduction—England the Cradle of Commercial Liberty—Adam Smith's Despair of Complete Freedom—Protectionist Fallacies of Great Statesmen—Lord Bacon's Erroneous Views—Dean Swift—Tyrannous Interference with Trade in Medieval Times—The

"Liber Albus"—Vexatious Regulation of Domestic Trade and Commerce in the City of London—The Monopolies granted by Queen Elizabeth—Agitation for Freedom of Trade in Elizabeth's Reign—Remarkable Speech of Cecil—Abandonment of the System of "Patents"—Public Statutes preventing Free Trade in Labour—The Statute of Labourers—Oppressive Laws to prevent Rise of Wages: consequent Misery of the People—Sir F. Eden's "State of the Poor"—Statutes for Regulating Labour in the Reign of George III.—Legislative Interference with the Button Trade—Unlawful Buttons—Ridiculous Regulation of Industry—Bad Effects of Monopolies on National Character—Repeal of Assize on Bread and the Combination Laws—The Statute of Apprenticeship—Prejudice against Foreign Workmen—Competitive Examinations.

WE have already glanced at some of the triumphs of that great struggle to reform our commercial legislation which may be said to have begun in 1776, when Adam Smith's immortal work on the wealth of nations was first given to the world. We have now, however, arrived at a period when it becomes necessary to write in a more connected form the narrative of the struggle. Though less showy in its effects than those great political revolutions and military events which have hitherto formed the staple of the historian's materials, it constitutes in itself a revolution of vast importance to human welfare, and one which has extended and is still extending its beneficent influence throughout the world. That that revolution began in England, that the principles of commercial liberty were first clearly proclaimed by English writers, and carried into practical effect by English statesmen, must for ever constitute one of the soundest claims of our country to the respect of the more enlightened among all nations. Dr. Smith's triumphant demonstration of the absurdity of the system of monopoly and state interference, however, was too directly opposed to the spirit of his time to be received at first with favour. The statesmen of that age had been educated amid ideas altogether different from those liberal and enlightened views on the subject of commercial liberty and political justice which the great apostle of free trade proclaimed to the world. Throughout the Continent, and particularly in France, our near neighbour and oldest rival, the protective system was seen in its fullest development, guarded on all sides by enormous duties and prohibitory laws. That these barriers were absolutely necessary to the well-being of a nation, and that their removal would lead to the speedy destruction of native industry and the commercial triumph of a foreign rival, was devoutly believed in, not only by the un-instructed multitude, with whom the maxims of protection to native industry were most popular, but by almost all writers and speakers on political subjects. In the pamphlets and newspapers of the time, in the discourses of Parliamentary orators, and in the speeches prepared by Ministers to be delivered from the throne, the truth of these doctrines was invariably assumed. The greater part of the sanguinary wars of the last century were undertaken for reasons in some way connected with them. To obtain the exclusive monopoly of some branch of foreign trade, to strike a blow at the commerce of a rival power, to rigidly exclude the foreigner from our own markets, and from all dealings with our colonies—these were the selfish and mistaken objects which the most enlightened among our statesmen did not hesitate openly to avow. As Bentham sneeringly remarked,

our soldiers had conquered for us a "prodigious right of trade" in all parts of the globe, and this without any very sensible result, save in an enormous addition to our own taxation. We were, moreover, encumbered with treaties which virtually bound us to purchase certain articles of particular nations in opposition to the national course of unrestrained commerce; and in return had obtained only stipulations for the sale of our own productions in markets, where the people, if left to themselves, would, in many cases, have been willing to purchase them under any circumstances. So strongly rooted did these ideas appear, that Dr. Adam Smith himself declared that he regarded the adoption of the views which he had established, with so much labour of meditation and research, as hopeless. "To expect," he says, "that the freedom of trade should ever be entirely restored in Great Britain, is as absurd as to expect that an Oceana or Utopia should ever be established in it. Not only the prejudices of the public, but, what is much more unconquerable, the private interests of many individuals, irresistibly oppose it. Were the officers of the army to oppose with the same zeal and unanimity any reduction in the number of forces, with which master manufacturers set themselves against every law that is likely to increase the number of their rivals in the home market—were the former to animate their soldiers in the same manner as the latter inflame their workmen, to attack with violence and outrage the proposers of any such regulation—to attempt to reduce the army would be as dangerous as it has now become to attempt to diminish in any respect the monopoly which our manufacturers have obtained against us. This monopoly has so much increased the number of some particular tribes of them that, like an overgrown standing army, they have become formidable to the Government, and, upon many occasions, intimidate the Legislature. The member of Parliament who supports every proposal for strengthening this monopoly is sure to acquire not only the reputation of understanding trade, but great popularity and influence with an order of men whose numbers and wealth render them of great importance. If he opposes them, on the contrary, and still more, if he has authority enough to be able to thwart them, neither the most acknowledged probity, nor the highest rank, nor the greatest public services can protect him from the most infamous abuse and detraction, from personal insults, nor sometimes from real danger, arising from the insolent outrage of furious and disappointed monopolists."* The truth of these views will be found remarkably exemplified in the history of Sir Robert Peel's effort to reform our tariff seventy years later; but that revolution which Adam Smith himself declared hopeless is now happily accomplished, and carried probably far beyond anything which this illustrious writer contemplated even as a Utopian dream.

The policy of monopoly and restriction is generally described under the name of "the commercial system," or that system which is based upon the assumed superiority

of money or the precious metals over every other kind of merchandise—a doctrine which, though sometimes recognised in the earlier periods of the world's history, had only obtained its full development during the last two centuries. But the artificial regulation of industry and commerce was of far earlier growth, and far more generally rooted in the minds of nations and their rulers. That commerce must not be left to itself; that the interests of the individual labourer, manufacturer, agriculturist, merchant, or home trader would, if not looked after, lead them into courses injurious to the welfare of the state, are among the oldest beliefs both of practical statesmen and political thinkers. The greatest minds of antiquity have not been able to extricate themselves from the dominion of these errors, which a few simple propositions now established have served almost entirely to overthrow. The great Lord Bacon enumerates among the "first remedies" of disorder in a state, principles which a youth of these days, who had attended the lectures of a professor of political economy, could not hear without a smile, as, for instance, the "well balancing of trade by Government regulation," the "cherishing" of manufactures, "the repressing of waste and excess by sumptuary laws," and the "*regulating of prices of things vendible*." He lays down the absurd maxim that the increase of any wealth must be at the expense of the foreigner, "for whatever (he says) is somewhere gotten is somewhere lost." The fact that in foreign trade both parties are satisfied with their interchange of commodities, and willing, if let alone, to continue the traffic indefinitely, did not suggest to him that there can be no loss in the transaction, but only a mutual advantage. His notions upon the lending of capital—that fruitful source of useful industry—appear equally puerile. Not to lend money gratuitously was, in the opinion even of the founder of inductive philosophy, a sign of "hardness of heart," but a thing which, in the depraved condition of human nature, must be tolerated. Ignorant of the truth that the lender of money is in no different case from the lender of lands, houses, or goods, or any other kind of values, and that there can be no difference, as far as the hirer is concerned, between hiring a ship and hiring the money with which to build or buy a ship, he declares it only better to mitigate the system of borrowing and lending by public law than "to suffer it to rage by connivance." How far this great philosopher and thinker upon political and social questions was from obtaining even a glimmering of the modern doctrine of free trade may be understood from the fact that he proposes that the law should establish two rates of interest for money, the one free and general for all, the other under license only to certain persons and "in certain places of merchandising." Without regard to the number or the wants of borrowers, or to the amount of capital disposable for lending, he recommends the state to reduce interest "in general to five in the hundred, and let that rate be proclaimed free and current." This, he adds, "will preserve borrowing from any general stop or dryness—this will ease infinite borrowers in the country—this will, in good

* "Wealth of Nations," book iv., chap. ii.

part, raise the price of land." In addition to this, he recommends that certain persons be licensed to lend to known merchants at a high rate, but with certain "cautions." The rate, even with the merchant himself, is in this scheme to be somewhat more easy than he used formerly to pay, "for by that means all borrowers shall have some ease by these reformatations." There is to be "no bank," but "every man be master of his own money; not," Bacon adds, "that I altogether dislike banks." These licensed lenders were to be in number indefinite, "but restrained to certain cities and towns," for then, he remarks, they will hardly be able to pass off other men's

considerable part of his writings to the task of persuading the Irish people that the true remedy for their social and political evils was the consumption of such commodities as only Ireland herself produced, unaware of the fact, that, as foreign commerce is but an exchange of home products for the productions of other countries, it must occasion as much industry at home as any other kind of commerce.

This selfish but foolish tendency to impose mischievous restrictions on trade has, through the influence of our recent struggle for the repeal of the customs duties upon agricultural produce of all kinds, become popularly asso-



ADAM SMITH, LL.D., AUTHOR OF "THE WEALTH OF NATIONS."

money in the country as their own, by which he means that it will be necessary to keep the lenders at the lower rate from gaining higher interest through the agency of the "usurer;" for no man, he observes, "will lend his money far off or put them into unknown hands." * Such are the childish speculations on commercial legislation of that "deep-browed Verulam," whose name is a synonym throughout the civilised world for human wisdom. Instances of similar peculiarities in the opinions of men less eminent for political sagacity may easily be cited. The celebrated Dean Swift devoted a

ciated with the landed interest; but in truth it has been a political vice common to all parties. To the merchants belongs the credit of an earlier conversion to the doctrines of free trade than was manifest in other classes; but formerly no class was more clamorous for protection. Manufacturers have always been jealous of the free importation of foreign articles; but if we could see the principle of meddling with the free development of trade carried to its highest point of absurdity, we must seek it in the regulations with which cities and chartered corporations have at all times surrounded their own internal industry and traffic—regulations many of which still exist, though more or

* Essays, "Of Seditions and Tumults."

less fallen into disuse before the light of general progress. An excellent view of these regulations may be obtained from the "Liber Albus, or White Book of the City of London," compiled in the year 1419 by John Carpenter, town clerk of London, and one of the four executors of the will of the well-known Richard Whittington, the hero of the child's story. No part of this volume is more curious than that which contains the various ordinances which anciently regulated the internal trade of the city. No kind of craft could be followed within the walls, except under such restrictions and regulations as make it at first hard to imagine how any trade could have existed at all. In these days, indeed, the commerce of any town would, under such conditions, inevitably languish and die out; and if in those times they did not prevent the city from attaining a certain kind of commercial prosperity, the reason is easily seen. In fact, if vexatious hindrances be now imposed on trade in any particular spot, the trade will simply betake itself elsewhere. But the old citizens of London had no "elsewhere" which, notwithstanding their grievances at home, was not far less preferable. Every political economist now knows what would be the condition into which a community would, under the circumstances, finally settle down. Those trades which were exceptionally burdened would simply exact from their customers, in the shape of higher profits, a compensation for their annoyance. The usurer, and the "reggrater," or "forestaller," of every kind appear to have been peculiarly visited with such regulations, restrictions, fines, and penalties. No dancing-master compelled by a cruel tyrant to go through an elaborate dance in a complete suit of armour, could have been more embarrassed than a citizen who ventured to make anything for the consumption of his neighbours. Let him resolve how he would to be just, and honest, and to walk by the light of civic laws, it would be difficult to avoid finding himself in the pillory some morning. Nor could the unfortunate Lombards, the trembling predecessors of the Smiths, Paynes, and Glyns, have hoped long to escape being led through the city (as some were) with their heads uncovered, unshod, and without girdle, upon horses without saddles, and being escorted to one of the city gates, and there bid depart for ever. Protectionism was, in fact, carried to its highest point in those early times, though, unlike the ordinary limitations upon free trade, the great majority of the civic regulations were intended not to favour the trader against the purchaser, but the purchaser against the trader. Such, for instance, was the ancient ordinance that the baker's dozen should, in defiance of arithmetic, consist of thirteen articles. Such was the rule that fishmongers should sell all the fish brought to market, and not attempt to correct an over-supply by withdrawing a portion for sale elsewhere; and such was the peculiarly harsh regulation that no butcher should salt his meat, which appears to have had no object, but to help the people to profit by the butcher's misfortune when he happened to have a large stock, in warm or damp weather. Such rules were, of course, always self-defeating; but wiser heads than those of

medieval aldermen have even now made but small progress in the appreciation of the truths of economical science.

The period of the usages and institutions which the "Liber Albus" brings to light is believed to extend from the earlier years of the reign of Edward I. to about the middle of that of Richard II. Among other of the innumerable vexations and oppressive laws which it contains, it is ordained that no one should purchase wines or wares of any kind brought by ship, in the Pool of the Thames. Vessels and boats with victuals of any kind on board were ordered to lie one day at anchor without selling anything. Some trades were forbidden to use fountain water, and others, including spirit brewers and maltsters, soft water for the purposes of their industry. Bowyers were not to send bows to Cornhill, or to any other place within the city for sale. Spur-makers were ordered to sell spurs at the rate of 6d. and 8d. the pair, the very best not to exceed 12d.; the prices to be charged by shoeing-smiths were fixed at three-halfpence for a common horse-shoe with six nails; with eight nails, 2d.; and for removing the same, $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; for putting a shoe on a courser, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; for putting a shoe on a charger, 3d.; and for removing a shoe from either, 1d. The prices of labour were generally fixed in like manner, and labourers or workmen who would not accept these harsh terms were to be arrested and imprisoned. Saddlers, skimmers, and tanners were particularly directed to be chastised for charging excessively; and fishmongers, poulterers, and other journeymen were warned to be equally careful how they assessed the value of their own work. The privilege of keeping inns was, like all other trades, confined to freemen; but foreigners and strangers, when admitted to the freedom for the purpose of becoming innkeepers, were commanded to keep their houses in the heart of the city, and avoid the banks of the Thames, which was a favourite locality for such houses of entertainment. No innkeeper was allowed to lodge a guest more than a day and a night, unless he would be responsible for any offences against the innumerable civic laws which his guest might commit. These "hostelers" were also forbidden to sell drink or victuals to any one but their guests; and it was the duty of city officers to search their houses to see that they had not transgressed this rule. No innkeeper was allowed to make ale or bread, but was enjoined by public enactment to buy of the brewers and bakers, and the former was compelled to sell his ale at certain fixed prices, in sealed gallons, pottles, and quarts. But although this regulation appeared to favour the brewers, that unfortunate class of producers seem to have been still greater sufferers by the system of civic tyranny. As soon as their brewing was finished, it was the duty of the brewer to send for the ale conner of the ward, in order to taste the ale. Upon so doing, the latter functionary, if he did not find the ale as good as it ought to be, with the assent of his alderman set a lower price upon it, which in the sale was not to be exceeded under pain of fine, imprisonment, and punishment by pillory. It may be a matter of surprise that any one in those times should voluntarily

continue to be a brewer. The reason is found in another enactment, that if any man or woman should decline to brew, or should brew a less quantity than he used to brew, in consequence of this ordinance, such person should be held to be a withdrawer of victuals from the city, and for such disobedience and malice should incur the penalty of imprisonment according to the will of the mayor for the time being, besides being compelled to forswear for ever his trade within the liberties of the city. No wine-taverner was allowed to mix old wine with new; and it was enacted that after the arrival of new wine at a tavern, none of it should be sold before the old was disposed of. Taverners who sold sweet wines were forbidden to deal in other wines, and the number of their taverns was limited.

The laws regulating the bread trade, traces of which still existed until very lately in the well-known "assize" of bread, were still more puerile and vexatious. The bread consumed within the city was made partly within the walls and partly in places at a distance. It was permitted to be made at Stratford and Bromley, in Essex, and at Stepney and St. Albans, from which places it was brought on pack-horses or in carts. At times, however, this import of strange bread was suddenly prohibited, and occasionally bread made in Southwark was also peremptorily ordered not to cross the river. Loaves were directed to be sold at two and four to the penny, and none were to be sold at a higher price, such as three or five farthings apiece. Bread was to be carried to market in baskets of a certain shape, coarse bread in boxes or hutches. The bakers were ordered not to give credit to the retailers if known to be in debt to others, and not to take bread back from them when once sold. The baker of brown bread was on no account to make white bread; nor the duly appointed maker of white bread to infringe upon the rights of the duly appointed baker of brown. The latter was not to have a bolting-cloth in his possession, or to sell his flour to cooks or any one else. No bakers were to heat their ovens with fern, straw, stubble, or reeds; they were not to buy corn for the purposes of re-sale; to take the servants of other bakers who had left their places without a licence; nor to make special arrangements with their landlords for a share in the profits of their oven; and the sheriff was directed to take no fines from bakers, but to inflict upon them punishment by pillory instead. Corn-dealers and millers were subjected to equally harsh laws. The sale of almost every kind of fish was regulated by enactments peculiar to itself. Butchers, and poulterers, and vegetable-sellers were, in like manner, regulated and instructed in the art of conducting their respective trades. It was, moreover, the constant practice, not only of the purveyors and servants of the king, but also of the great lords and important inhabitants of the neighbourhood, to visit the great markets before the hours appointed for the opening of public sales, at which hours, after these privileged persons had had the "pick and choice" of the various commodities, at prices fixed by the city regulation, or public acts, the retailers and the poorer classes were allowed to begin making their market. Tailors, dyers, weavers, boot-

makers, skinnners, furriers, old clothesmen, and others were also threatened with the pillory for innumerable breaches of similar ordinances. "That," says Mr. Riley, "the favoured and so-called free citizen of London, even, despite the extensive privileges in reference to trade which he enjoyed, was in possession of more than the faintest shadow of liberty, can hardly be alleged, if we only call to mind the substance of these laws, filled as they are with enactments and ordinances arbitrary, illiberal, and oppressive: laws which compelled each citizen, whether he would or no, to be bail and surety for a neighbour's good behaviour, over whom, perhaps, it was impossible for him to exercise the slightest control; laws which forbade him to make his market for the day until the purveyors for the king and the great lords of the land had stripped the stalls of all that was choicest and best; laws which forbade him to pass the city walls for the purpose even of meeting his own purchased goods; laws which bound him to deal with certain persons or communities only, or within the precincts only of certain localities; laws which dictated, under severe penalties, what sums, and no more, he was to pay to his servants and artisans; laws which drove his dog out of the streets, while they permitted "genteel dogs" to roam at large—nay, even more than this: laws which subjected him to domiciliary visits from the city officials on various pleas and pretexts; which compelled him to carry on a trade under heavy penalties, irrespective of the question whether or not it was at his loss, and which occasionally went so far as to lay down rules at what hours he was to walk in the streets, and incidentally what he was to eat and what to drink; viewed individually, laws and ordinances such as these may seem, perhaps, but of trifling moment; but 'trifles make life,' the poet says, and to have lived fettered by numbers of restrictions like these must have rendered life irksome in the extreme to a sensitive man, and a burden hard to be borne."*

These interferences with industry and trade, though generally carried furthest in the internal regulations of great towns, are also abundantly illustrated in the laws of the realm. Liberty to adopt what business a man pleased, to ask what price he pleased for his labour or goods, to betake himself to what market appeared best for obtaining employment or disposing of his commodities, was a thing unknown to our forefathers. Generally these burdens upon the people were borne patiently; but occasionally they led to serious outbreaks. The popular rebellions in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries were no doubt in great measure attributable to these causes; but the most remarkable protest against restrictions on commerce was afforded by the difficulties encountered by Queen Elizabeth in her endeavours to establish monopolies of particular branches of domestic trade and industry in favour of individual subjects. That politic princess wisely abandoned the system as soon as it seriously endangered her popularity, as, indeed, did

* "Monumenta Gildhallæ Londoniensis," "Liber Albus," &c., ed. by H. T. Riley, vol. i, 1859, introd., p. xc.

James I. under similar circumstances. The speech in which Elizabeth's determination was announced to the House of Commons by Cecil affords complete evidence of the nature and extent of these monopolies or "patents"—as they were called from the instrument which granted them—the mischief which they had done, and the widespread discontent they had occasioned; and is also curious from its close resemblance—in all but the evidently forced jocularly of the speaker—to some of those speeches in which the late Sir Robert Peel announced his schemes of economical and commercial reform.

"I take it," said Cecil, "there is no patent whereof the execution hath not been injurious. Would that they had never been granted. I hope there shall never be more. (All the House said 'Amen.')

In particular, most of these patents have been supported by letters of assistance from Her Majesty's Privy Council; but whosoever looks upon them shall find that they carry no other stile, than with relation to the patent. I dare assure you from henceforth there shall be no more granted. They shall all be revoked. But to whom do they repair with these letters? to some outhouse, to some desolate widow, to some simple cottage, or poor ignorant people, who, rather than they would be troubled and undo themselves by coming up hither, will give anything in reason for these caterpillars' satisfaction. I say, therefore, there shall be a proclamation general throughout the realm, to notify Her Majesty's resolution in this behalf. And because you may eat your meat more savoury than you have done, every man shall have salt as good and cheap as he can buy it or make it, freely without danger of that patent, which shall be presently revoked. The same benefit shall they have which have cold stomachs, both for *aqua vite* and *aqua composita*, and the like. And they that have weak stomachs, for their satisfaction, shall have vinegar and alegar, and the like, set at liberty. Train-oil shall go the same way; oil of blubber shall march in equal rank; brushes and bottles endure the same judgment. The patent for pouldavy, if it be not called in, it shall be. Oade (wood) which, as I take it, is not restrained either by law or statute, but only by proclamation (I mean from the former sowing), though for the saving thereof it might receive good disputation; yet for your satisfaction, the Queen's pleasure is to revoke that proclamation, only she prayeth thus much, that when she cometh on progress to see you in your countries, she be not driven out of your towns by suffering it to infect the air too near them. Those that desire to go sprucely in their ruffs, may, at less charge than accustomed, obtain their wish; for the starch patent, which hath so much been prosecuted, shall now be repealed. There are other patents which be considerable, as the patent of new drapery, which shall be suspended and left to the law. Irish yarn is a matter I am sorry there is cause of complaint about; for the savageness of the people and the war have frustrated the hope of the patentee, a gentleman of good service and desert, a good subject to Her Majesty, and a good member of the commonwealth—

Mr. Carmarthen. Notwithstanding, it shall be suspended and left to the law. The patent for calfskins and fells shall endure the censure of the law. But I must tell you, there is no reason that all should be revoked, for the Queen means not to be swept of her prerogative. I say it shall be suspended, if the law do not warrant it. There is another servant of Her Majesty's, Mr. Onslow, one of her pensioners, an honest gentleman and a faithful servant, he hath the patent for steel, which one Mr. Beale once had; this, too, because of complaints, shall be suspended. There is another that hath the patent for leather, Sir Edward Dyer, a gentleman of good desert, honest, religious, and wise; this was granted unto him thirty years ago. It crept not in by the new misgovernment of the time; yet this shall also be suspended. The patent for cards shall be suspended and triable by the common law. The patent for glasses, which though I do least apprehend to be prejudicial to the public good, yet it is left to the law. There is another patent for saltpetre, that hath been both accused and slandered; it digs into every man's house, it annoys the inhabitant, and generally troubleth the subject; for this, I beseech you, be contented. Yet I know I am to blame to desire it, it being condemned by you. Her Majesty means to take this patent unto herself, and advise with her counsel touching the same. For I must tell you the kingdom is not so well furnished with powder as now it should be. But if it be thought fit upon advice to be cancelled, Her Majesty commanded me to tell you, that though she be willing to help the grave gentleman that hath that patent, yet out of that abundant desire that she hath to give you complete satisfaction, it shall be repealed. This hath come to the ear of the Queen, and I have been most earnest to search for the instrument, and as a counsellor of state, have done my best endeavour to salve the sore. Then I must needs give you this for a future caution. That whatsoever is subject to public expectation cannot be good, while the Parliament matters are ordinary talk in the street. I have heard myself, being in my coach, these words spoken aloud:—"God prosper those that further the overthrow of these monopolies; God send the Prerogative touch not our liberty!"

The grievances glanced at in this remarkable financial statement chiefly related, however, to restrictions from exercising certain trades and branches of commerce. The public statutes against free trade in labour generally were far more serious infringements upon liberty, and hindrances to the national development. These appear—as far as the nominally free labourers were concerned—to have had their origin in the famous Statute of Labourers, passed in 1349; though, indeed, this statute of Edward III. was preceded by ordinances of a similar character made by him, which had partially failed in their application. The Commons had complained that no attention was paid to the ordinance for regulating the wages of labourers. This statute was therefore passed, in order to enforce obedience by corporal punishments and

pecuniary fines. It states that, since the pestilence, no person would serve, unless he was paid double the usual wages allowed five years before, to the great detriment of the Lords and Commons. It was therefore enacted that, in future, carters, ploughmen, plough-drivers, shepherds, swineherds, and other servants, should be content with such liveries and wages as they received in the twentieth year of the King's reign, and two or three years before; and that, in districts where they had severally been paid in wheat, they should receive wheat, or money, at the rate of 10d. a bushel, at the option of their employers. They were to be hired for a year, and other accustomed periods, and not by the day. Weeders and haymakers were to be paid at the rate of 1d. a day; mowers, 5d. a day, or 5d. the acre; and reapers, during the first week in August, 2d. a day; and from that time till the end of the month 3d. a day, without diet or any other perquisite. Labourers of the above description were enjoined to carry their implements of husbandry openly in their hands to market towns, and to apply for hire in a public quarter of the town. The wages of threshing were also regulated. A man, for threshing a quarter of wheat or rye, was allowed 2½d.; for threshing a quarter of barley, oats, beans, and pease, 1½d.; or a certain number of sheaves or bushels in places where it had been customary to pay in kind. No person was to quit his own village, in order to obtain work in summer, if he could get employment at the above wages, except the people of Staffordshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Craven in Yorkshire, and the marches of Scotland and Wales, and other parts, who—for what reason does not appear—were permitted to leave their own county. Labourers were to be sworn twice a year to observe these regulations, and offenders were punishable with three or more days' imprisonment in the stocks. Offenders were liable to imprisonment, till they could find sureties, to serve for the accustomed wages, or to sell their goods in the usual way. The excess above the common wages allowed to labourers might be sued for by the master. Labourers, artificers, and servants, flying from one county to another in consequence of these regulations, were to be imprisoned till the next sessions. There is also a statute of this arbitrary Sovereign issued, with the advice of his prelates, nobles, and learned men, which is noted in the preamble of the Statute of Labourers, by which it was enacted that every able-bodied person under sixty years of age, not having competent means of support, should be bound to serve, if required to do so, in the employment he was most fitted for, at the wages usually given. A subsequent section, in order to compel able men to labour for the necessities of life, imposed the penalty of imprisonment on all persons who, giving alms through pretence of piety or charity, should encourage the idleness of sturdy labourers.

In 1360 the Statute of Labourers was confirmed by Parliament, and the observance of it enforced under penalty of imprisonment for fifteen days, and branding in the forehead with an iron, for offenders who absented themselves from their work, or quitted

their place of abode; and magistrates were directed, in case they fled into towns, to deliver them up, under penalty of £10 to the king, and £5 to the masters who should reclaim them. In order to prevent combinations among artificers, it was declared "that all alliances of masons and carpenters, and congregations, chapters, ordinances, and oaths betwixt them made, should be thenceforth void and wholly annulled." The object of this statute was, of course, to benefit the master, by fixing a maximum for wages; and although it pointed out a mode by which its provisions might be avoided, by making it lawful "to every lord, or other, to make bargain and covenant of their work in gross with such labourers and artificers when it please them, so that they perform such works well and lawfully, according to the bargain or covenant with them thereof made," it is believed to have been only optional in the master to adopt this mode of hiring; and it is supposed that the labourer could be compelled to work for the statute wages by the day or the year, unless his employer could persuade him to work by the piece for less.

Having ineffectually endeavoured to control the wages of industry, the Legislature attempted, by statutes equally impracticable, to restrict the labourer in the disposition of his slender earnings; and, accordingly, several acts were passed for the regulation of the food and other remuneration of the labourer, directing that the servants, both of lords, and artificers, and tradesmen, should be served once a day with meat or fish, and the offal of other victuals, such as milk and cheese, according to their station; and that they should wear cloth of which the whole piece did not cost more than two marks—that is, scarcely 12d. a yard. Tradesmen, artificers, and yeomen were forbidden to buy cloth for their own wear of more than £2 the piece, which is about 1s. 6d. a yard. Carters, ploughmen, plough-drivers, ox-herds, neat-herds, shepherds, pig-drivers, and all other attendants on cattle, threshers, and other labourers employed in husbandry, and others not worth 40s. in money or in goods, were to use no other cloth than what was called blanket and russet, of the value of 12d. the yard. Clothiers were directed to make suitable quantities of cloth of the different prices, and mercers and shopkeepers to provide a sufficient assortment of each, in order that the law might be duly observed. To carry these laws into effect, it was enacted that clothiers should make their cloth conformably to the prices appointed by the statute. However, it appears from a subsequent regulation of the Legislature, that, not being allowed to raise their price, they had contrived to indemnify themselves by shortening the length of a piece of cloth.

Of course, a limitation of the wages of labour to the ancient rate, whilst the price of all the necessities of life, but more particularly of corn, the principal article of subsistence in these times, was continually varying, compelled the people to practise every species of evasion. If the wages fixed by statute were adhered to, the pay of a labourer or artificer must have been unchanged throughout a period during which the price

of wheat varied from 2s. to £1 6s. 8d. "The rate of wages," as Sir F. Eden remarks, "if it was intended for the benefit of labourers, ought to have varied with every variation of the price of provisions. An attempt of this nature would, I confess, be no less absurd than the other. It, in fact, presumes that the Legislature are the best judges how much individuals can afford to give for the work they want, and that a master with capital is at the mercy of a needy workman without one. However, it would have been at least consistent in the Legislature, whilst they were telling a serving man what he should eat, to specify what he should pay for his food, and to have regulated the price of the essential articles of subsistence, instead of busying themselves in a frivolous statute to secure a cheap supply of hens, pullets, capons, and geese to great men's tables. The regulation of wages was a device confessedly framed by the upper classes for their own advantage, and, if not intended to produce that result, certainly tended to cramp the exertions of industry. Great proprietors, who, in their zeal to participate in the conveniences and elegancies offered them by commerce, had gradually relinquished their arbitrary rights over the persons of their dependents for a pecuniary equivalent, which enabled them to exchange the riotous hospitality of a castle for the splendour of the Court and the capital, soon discovered that a man acquired, if not additional bodily strength, at least an additional spur to industry from emancipation: they saw the strong inducements held out, both by commerce and manufacture, to the idle occupiers of their manors, and felt that the various pretexts for enfranchisement, supported by the subtleties of the courts of justice, would in the end, had they not been resisted, lead to the utter extinction of villeinage. The new system of working for hire, which was gradually making its way, was more profitable to them, and more conducive to national prosperity, than the labour of slaves; but it is doubtful whether the great political truth that the labour of free hands is more productive to the employer than the service of slaves was, in that unenlightened period, understood, or voluntarily practised, by great proprietors. They probably could not comprehend the beneficial effects of this important revolution, and thus they endeavoured to preserve some affinity between the new class of labourers and the old class of villeins, by limiting their earnings, as they had before controlled their persons. All the restrictions of the Legislature on personal industry"—adds Sir F. Eden, from whose work on the "State of the Poor" this account of the legislation affecting industry in the fourteenth century is derived—"evince a disposition of this kind. The various statutes to regulate wages, dress, and apparel seemed to have been framed with the same view—namely, to curb the aspiring exertions of industry and independency."

The Statute of Labourers was rigorously enforced, and, notwithstanding the many inconveniences arising from its provisions, it was confirmed by several subsequent Acts of Parliament. But the Commons made great complaints that masters were obliged to give their servants and labourers great wages to prevent their

running away, and that the encouragement which they received in these evil practices often induced them, upon the slightest cause of disgust, to quit their masters; that they wandered thus from country to country, and that many of the runaways turned beggars, and led idle lives in cities and boroughs, although they had sufficient bodily strength to gain a livelihood, if they pleased to work. Many wandered in parties of two, three, and four, from village to village; but the greater number turned out "*sturdy rogues*," and infested the kingdom with frequent robberies. To remedy these evils, the Commons proposed that no relief should be given to those who were able to work, within boroughs or in the country; that vagrant beggars should be imprisoned till they consented to return home to work; and that whoever harboured any runaway servant in his service should be liable to a penalty of £10. It does not appear from the Rolls that the King assented to the above bill, but it appears to have been the groundwork of a subsequent statute, and shows us the early opinions of Parliament on the subject of mendicancy, which was, of course, greatly increased by these mischievous laws. Soon afterwards the Commons complained that the statutes of labourers were not attended to, but that persons employed in husbandry fled into cities, and became artificers, mariners, or clerks (that is, priests), to the great detriment of agriculture; and, in consequence of these absurd complaints, it was enacted that the statutes passed in the preceding reign should be carried into execution. Justices were accordingly enjoined to take security of vagrants for their good behaviour. In the year 1388, the statutes relative to artificers, labourers, servants, and victuallers were confirmed; and it was further directed that no servant or labourer should depart from one part of the country to another, to serve, or to reside elsewhere, or under pretence of going a pilgrimage, without a letter patent, specifying the cause of his departure, and the time of his return, which might be granted at the discretion of a justice of the peace. Every vagrant who could not produce a letter patent was to be taken up, put into the stocks, and imprisoned until he found surety to return to his former master. Servants travelling on the business of their masters were exempt from the penalties of the act; but apprentices in trades, where they were not much wanted, might be compelled to assist in getting in the harvest. In the same sessions the wages of labourers in husbandry were again regulated. The people were restrained, by pecuniary penalties, from giving or receiving more than the statute allowed. For the first offence, both the giver and taker were to forfeit whatever was given above the regulation; for the second offence, double; and for the third offence, treble; and if the receiver of excessive wages was unable to pay the penalty, he was to be imprisoned for forty days. By the same statute, those who had served in any agricultural occupation till they were twelve years of age, were restrained from being put to any trade, on penalty of the covenant of apprenticeship being void. In the following year, in consequence of an application of the Commons that the Statutes of

CARRYING BREAD TO LONDON ON PACK-HORSES.



Labourers should be enforced, it was enacted, that "forasmuch as a man cannot put the price of corn, and other victuals, in certain, the justices should, at Easter and Michaelmas, according to the price of provisions, make proclamation how much every mason, carpenter, and other workman, and labourers should receive by the day, as well in harvest as at other times of the year, with or without meat and drink."*

This was a slight improvement, and, as an approach towards liberty, may be compared to that sliding-scale for the artificial regulation of the supplies of corn which Sir Robert Peel adopted to prepare the nation for his great free-trade measures. But reform, in this respect, had made little progress even at the beginning of the present century. In the matter of the personal liberty of the workman, so essential to the development of free trade, the laws of the land were, until very lately, scarcely less arbitrary, vexatious, and oppressive. A great variety of statutes for regulating labour were passed even during the reign of George III. Some of them, indeed—though false in spirit, and really mischievous in their operation—were not inhumane in their objects; but the bulk of them were unjustifiable interferences with the natural operations of the labour market. Workmen were, by these comparatively recent laws, forbidden to enter into any agreement among themselves, whether in writing or not, for obtaining an advance of wages, or lessening or even altering their usual hour or time of working. To meet together to consider the condition and prospects of their trade, with a view to these objects, and even to be present at such a meeting, though not one of the trade, was punishable with imprisonment and hard labour. To contribute money towards the maintenance of such refractory workmen was equally illegal. There were statutes in force regulating what kind of workmen masters should employ in particular trades; but by the 39 & 40 Geo. III. such masters were empowered to apply to the magistrates for a licence to infringe these rules, which licence the magistrate was required to grant when any qualified workman usually employed in such trade should "refuse to work therein for reasonable wages," or to work for any particular person, or to refuse to work for any other cause. By another act of the reign of George III., it was provided that the time of working for journeyman paper-makers at the vat, if the master should so require, should be half an hour about each part of fine-weave and plate papers, twenty of which were to make a day's work. Every day-worker was, by legislative enactment, compelled to work twelve hours per day, allowing one hour thereout for refreshment. The wages of journeymen weavers in London and Middlesex were ordered, by 13 Geo. III., cap. 68, to be settled by the Lord Mayor and justices at the General Quarter Sessions, who were directed to publish the rates, when requested, in the daily newspapers. Any master weaver who should give more or less to any of his journeymen than the prices so settled, should, on the oath of one witness, forfeit £50.

The legislature of King George III.'s reign likewise took especial note of buttons, including foreign buttons, buttons made of wood, cloth buttons, and metal buttons. No one was to have, even in his possession, any foreign buttons under the most terrible penalties; and shops, warehouses, and dwelling-houses were liable to be searched for any such treasonable articles. Nobody was allowed to make, sell, or sew on, any buttons made of wood only, and turned in imitation of other buttons. An information having been lodged against an unfortunate person for making wooden buttons contrary to the statute, the jury, after a solemn charge from the judge, found a verdict that the button was of wood, but that there was in it a shank of wire. After a long argument, judgment was given for the King, on the ground that this was a button of wood notwithstanding the shank, the judge learnedly observing that the shank was no essential part of the button, for buttons of silk and hair have no shanks. By another act Englishmen were forbidden to make or sew any buttons or button-holes of serge, drugget, frieze, camlet, or any other stuff of which clothes are usually made, the offender being liable to be committed to the common gaol of the county or place where he should be found, and kept to hard labour for three calendar months (4 Geo. I., cap. 7). An exception was made in favour of persons wearing velvet clothes, who might choose what buttons they pleased; but excepting in regard to these garments the wearers were equally liable to penalties. It was also part of the law of this realm that no one should wear printed or dyed calico, with the special proviso that the act did not extend to calico dyed all blue. The statute of 14 Geo. III., cap. 72, gravely recites that doubts had arisen whether stuff wholly made of cotton spun within this kingdom ought not to be considered as calico, and declares that any person may use the same in apparel or otherwise; that in every piece there shall be woven in the warp in both selvages three blue stripes, each stripe of one thread only, "the first of which stripes shall be the first or outermost thread, the second of the stripes shall be the third thread, and the third of the stripes shall be the fifth thread; and, instead of the word 'calico,' each piece shall be marked with the words 'British manufactory.'"

* Some of these old statutes remained till lately unrepealed, and it has happened within the last ten years that a defendant to an action brought by a tailor put in the plea that the articles of clothing supplied were furnished with buttons of silk, in contravention of the statute. It is hardly surprising that our progress in population and wealth before the partial relaxation of these unjust and pernicious laws was extremely slow as compared with the subsequent period. It is, indeed, a remarkable evidence of the spirit and energy of the English race that their numbers should have increased at all under such circumstances, or the people escaped from sinking into that listless condition which writers describe as the characteristic of the natives of Iceland, and which Mr. Baring Gould, the latest of our travellers

* Sir F. Eden's "State of the Poor," 4to. London: 1797.

* Chitty's "Treatise on the Laws of Commerce," vol. ii., p. 302.

in that region, traces entirely to the mischievous influence of the interference with all trade formerly exercised by the Danish Government.

The silly system of attempting to fix the price of bread by law, was maintained far into the present century, and is even now not everywhere abolished. The most arbitrary acts were done by those entrusted with power to interfere with the baking trade. Mr. Scholey, alderman of London, in his evidence before the Select Committee on the Bread Laws, in 1815, stated that the Court of Aldermen had, of their own judgment, shortly before fined a baker £500 for having traded in flour on which he was to have only a factorage—an offence of a purely imaginary kind. "The regulation of the trade," says Mr. McCulloch, "was supposed to be necessary, to prevent that monopoly on the part of the bakers which, it was feared, might otherwise take place. But it is needless, perhaps, to say that this apprehension was of the most futile description. The trade of a baker is one which may be easily learned, and it requires no considerable capital to carry it on; so that were those engaged in the business in any particular town to attempt to force up prices to an artificial elevation, the combination would be immediately defeated by the competition of others; and even though this were not the case, the facility with which bread may be baked at home, would of itself serve to nullify the efforts of any combination. But the assize regulations were not merely useless—they rendered the price of flour a matter of comparative indifference to the baker, and they obliged the baker to use the finest flour and make the best bread—to sell at the same rate as those who used inferior flour, and whose bread was decidedly of a worse quality. But these considerations, how obvious soever they may appear, were for a long time entirely overlooked. According, however, as the use of wheaten bread was extended, it was found to be impracticable to set assizes in small towns and villages; and notwithstanding that the fewness of the bakers in such places gave them greater facilities for combining together, the price of bread was almost uniformly lower in them than in places where assizes were set. In consequence, partly, of this circumstance, but still more of the increase of intelligence as to such matters, the practice of setting an assize was gradually relinquished in most places, and in 1815 it was expressly abolished by an act of the Legislature (53 Geo. III. cap. 99), in London and its environs. In other places, though the power to set the assize still subsists, it is seldom acted upon, and has fallen into comparative disuse."

It was not until 1824 that wiser and more equitable views of the freedom of workmen and masters were finally established, by the repeal of the Combination Laws. In that year a select committee of the House of Commons reported strongly against the whole body of the laws then existing on this subject. After collecting a large amount of evidence from various persons familiar with the practical working of these regulations, the committee declared their opinion that the laws to prevent combinations and meetings among workmen had

altogether failed in their objects, and had even rendered more violent and dangerous those trade associations which existed in spite of the law. It was remarked that although the masters had often combined to lower the rates of their workmen's wages, as well as to resist a demand for an increase, to regulate their hours of working, and sometimes to discharge their men who would not consent to the conditions offered, no instances had been adduced of any masters having been punished for such offences against the law. Prosecutions against masters had, indeed, taken place where the steps taken by the masters had been followed by riotous proceedings and acts of violence; but in no case had a conviction been obtained. On the other hand, to show the partial and unjust working of these laws, it was found that prosecutions for similar offences had frequently been carried on under the statute and the common law against the workmen, numbers of whom had, in consequence, suffered different periods of imprisonment. The committee, accordingly, recommended that "masters and workmen should be freed from such restrictions, and be left at perfect liberty to make such agreements as they may mutually think proper." And an act was accordingly passed to that effect.

Thus the present century has seen almost all of these vexatious restrictions removed. The mischievous assize of labour, or system of settling the rates of wages by order of justices of the peace, had existed ever since the fourteenth century, untouched by constitutional settlements or Bill of Rights—indeed, was scarcely heard of as a grievance amid all the political discussions of that long period. No greater proof can be found of how little the people were regarded by the parliaments and rulers of those bad old times. For four hundred years the poor were thus harassed and oppressed—driven from this employment, shut out from that, regulated, watched, and kept down by fine and imprisonment—in a way which rendered their supposed emancipation from the old feudal serfdom a change but in name. What they might do, and what they might not do, in the way of exercise of their industry—their only birthright—would have comprised more rules than a man with leisure could have got by heart in a lifetime. The very intervals for their meals were defined by law. And amid all this no voice was heard, except an occasional outcry on the part of those who were more happily circumstanced, against the alleged idleness of the poor. Whenever labour became scarcer, whether by reason of a plague removing a large number of the competitors for employment, or from the natural increase of employment due to the growth of wealth and manufactures, this cry was raised. Just as in France, before the great Revolution, no belief was more common among the privileged classes than that the labouring class would not work; and as in our own colonies, since we have emancipated the negroes, it is the common complaint of the planters that the blacks are lazy, and will not toil for the old remuneration of mere food and shelter, so it was customary at every period when the English labourer's wages had a tendency to rise, to exclaim

against their exorbitant demands, and to call upon the Legislature for more stringent laws. Some of these cries were, no doubt, honestly believed in. Before the principles taught by Adam Smith were generally understood, a notion prevailed that the foreign commerce of England was dependent upon the power of manufacturers to obtain cheap labour; and that a rise in wages would prevent their supplying goods to foreign markets at those low rates which it was supposed were the cause of our export trades. Among the many good effects of the promulgation of sounder views, we may place in the first rank the dispersion of these false doctrines. It was *at last* perceived that countries in which labour was cheaper than with us—as was the case almost throughout the Continent—had no superiority in the condition of their export trade, but the contrary; while in countries in which labour was dearer, as in America and the new colonies, the export trade was often remarkably flourishing. In the latter case the facts observed were no doubt owing chiefly to the greater abundance and superior natural fertility of land; but, in fact, exports are merely the mode in which a country pays for the foreign articles which it desires to consume. If, therefore, the exporters were really injured by high wages, they would simply increase the price of their goods. It is absurd to suppose that English consumers would go without tea because the cottons and woollens which we export to China in exchange had risen in price through an increase of wages in those particular trades. The merchants would only export some other articles, or would recompense themselves for the additional expense of their trade by a rise in the price of tea.

It is quite true that many restrictions on domestic industry were supported even by the labouring classes themselves. The outcry against that settling of foreign artificers in England, by which our arts and manufactures in earlier times have been so largely improved, has always been popular; and the legislation on this subject, which has so often disgraced our statute book, may be said to have been forced upon the rulers for the time being by the clamour of the people, who were not aware that great branches of industry, hitherto scarcely followed in this country, had been created by the very causes which they desired to remove. The Guild regulations, which were all so many obstructions to fair play in the struggle for employment, were naturally supported by those fortunate classes—for labour itself had its aristocracy and privileged few—who benefited by them at the expense of the consumer. Such, too, were the old apprenticeship laws, which were always jealously supported by the working classes. By the old common law of England, which may be said to have been the spontaneous growth of the moral sense of the people, every one had a right to employ himself in any business he pleased. Bad legislation, however, succeeded in corrupting the popular mind on this point by sowing ideas of a totally different character. By the Statute of Apprenticeship, which existed up to the year 1814, it was enacted that no person should for the future exercise any trade, craft, or mystery at that time exercised in England and Wales,

unless he had previously served to it an apprenticeship of seven years at least. The judges, however, who had been bred in different views of law, were always unwilling to give effect to the provisions of this statute. Nothing, indeed, could be more unjust than this regulation; nor was its injustice mitigated by the extreme harshness of the provisions generally inserted in apprenticeship indentures. Moreover, nothing could be more unreasonable than the fixing of one period—especially a period so long as seven years—for the learning of every craft. There were, of course, trades which required infinitely longer time to learn than others; and, of course, the capacities, and the industry, and zeal of learners were also various. Under the system, however, which the wisdom of the rulers of our forefathers instituted, all occupations were brought to one lifeless level. A dreary servitude was the only “porch and inlet” by which the British workman could find his way to the privilege of toiling for his daily bread. No amount of steady perseverance in the study of his art could save him from one week of this term; no willingness on the part of the master to take him for a shorter period could relieve him from the disabilities of the law; and if he had the misfortune to be brought up without “serving his time,” as it was called, to any business, no after struggle could repair the error.

It must be admitted, however, that the opposition on the part of the working classes to the admission of workmen who had not, like themselves, served a term of apprenticeship, was not unreasonable. As long as law or custom sanctioned and maintained these barriers, it was a manifest injustice to the workmen of any particular trade to be suddenly flooded with competitors for work who had not been subjected to a similar ordeal. It is possible to conceive that the wages in any trade might be reduced far below the general level by a relaxation of these rules. Nor was the opposition to immigrations of foreign workmen, however illiberal, altogether based upon delusions. The statesmen of the past, who have framed the laws for the regulation of our domestic and foreign trade, have been guilty of far graver economical errors than were implied in the workman's dislike of large importations of labour. These immigrations, it must be remembered, generally took place in consequence, not of an extraordinary demand here for workmen, but of some political circumstances abroad. Such was the celebrated Edict of Nantes, which drove out of France large numbers of Protestant workmen, who took refuge in this country. These refugees were in great part connected with the silk trade, and the redundancy of labour which they occasioned in that trade was certainly one of the causes why the English weavers sunk to that position of dependence to which they have so long been doomed. The only traces of these laws now existing are to be found in some city regulations, and in the voluntary practice of certain trades, from the effect of which they are rapidly dying out. We must, however, note a remarkable exception to this principle in the legal profession, where, as if for ever to deprive the better educated classes of any right to reproach the

workman with his illiberality and selfishness, regulations still exist as to the term of apprenticeship or articles, the number of articulated clerks, and other things, which though based, as all these abuses are, upon a pretended regard for public interest, have really no other effect than to restrict the number of lawyers, and maintain a rate of remuneration above that level to which it would inevitably fall under a system of free trade in law.

It must not, however, be assumed that the system of equality and fair play for labour, either of arm and brain, has yet, even with these exceptions, been completely established. In the public service, though it is greatly improved in comparison with former periods, nothing like equality has yet been secured. The army and navy are surrounded by barriers tending to keep out all but favoured classes. In the Civil Service some attempt has been made to inaugurate a better system, by the institution of competitive examinations. These examinations, however, have in practice as yet been far from satisfactory, from the unwillingness of the Government to adopt what is called "open" competition; and from the custom of examining the candidates in branches of learning which are practically open only to the few who receive expensive educations—a system the more objectionable, as in most cases these special qualifications have no real relation to the duties to be performed. Except in the Indian Service, it may even be doubted whether any improvement has yet been attained.

CHAPTER LII.

The History of Free Trade (Introduction continued)—Customs and Excise Laws—Origins of Free Trade Ideas—Protectionist Doctrines—The "Commercial" System—Policy of Restriction—Beginning of the Great Commercial Reform—Pitt's leaning towards Free Trade—Ridiculous Character of our Tariff before his Time—Pitt's Commercial Reforms Defeated by the War—Difficulties of the British Merchant under the old Custom House Laws—Sketch of the History of the Corn Laws—Selfishness of the Landowners—Cruel Prohibition of Cheap Food—Government Rewards for making Bread Scarce—Popular Remedies for the Scarcity of Bread—Alleged Agricultural Distress—Passing of the Corn Law of 1815—Corn Law Riots—Great Excitement throughout the Country—Members of Parliament attacked in the Streets—Effects of the Law—The Free Trade Petition of the Merchants of London in 1820—Lord Liverpool's Reply—Lord Stanley's early Advocacy of Free Trade—Parliamentary Inquiries into the State of the Foreign Trade—Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Canning's Reforms—Number of Duties for Protection of the Landlord's Interests—Failure of the Corn Laws to Improve the Farmer's Circumstances—Identity of the Interests of Landed and Manufacturing Classes—Cost of "Protection" to the People—Difference between Manufacturing and Agricultural Restriction.

THE struggle of the people to free themselves from the mischievous interference with domestic trade and industry sketched in the last chapter was of the utmost importance to the national progress; but it is the struggle for the reform of our customs and excise laws which is more generally referred to as the free trade battle. That great movement commenced within the lifetime of men now living. Isolated passages have been discovered in early English authors, implying the doctrine of free trade; but the writers were evidently not aware of the importance of the principle they enunciated, nor prepared to follow it into its consequences. The French economists

of the last century, generally known by the name of "Physiocrats," amidst much that was vague or erroneous, did indeed plead for liberty of commerce; but their chief object appears to have been to support their mistaken theory that, as the land (so they held) was the source of all production, one tax laid directly on the soil would really tax commodities as much as the customs and excise laws then existing.

Adam Smith was the first to point out clearly the true interest of the nation in these matters. Up to his time our excise and customs laws had been in the greatest possible confusion. Prohibitions had been imposed in innumerable instances, for what was called the protection of British industry—that is, for compelling the people to purchase nothing but home-made commodities. In other cases, high customs' duties were laid on for the avowed purpose of discouraging importation. Our forefathers were under the impression that money, or, what is the same thing, the precious metals, were of far more importance to the country than any other kind of merchandise; and as all goods sent abroad must be paid for either in money or other goods, they believed that by diminishing imports they must increase the quantities of gold and silver brought into the country. Adam Smith's work, "The Wealth of Nations," at length exposed the folly of these views; and the works of subsequent writers, including Bentham, Ricardo, J. B. Say, and Mr. Mill, finally demolished all that was erroneous in these doctrines. As to the principle of what was called "protection" generally, it was shown that it had no effect whatever in increasing the amount of employment for the people, while it laid the consumer under a heavy tax in the increased price of imported articles. The true nature of foreign commerce was for the first time explained, for the guidance of legislators and for the enlightenment of the people generally. It was seen that the sole object of that foreign trade, which our statesmen had regarded with favour simply on account of the large amount of our productions which it caused to be exported, really and truly centred in the commodities brought back in exchange. In short, the nation required annually so much tea, sugar, coffee, silks, corn, and other things; and in order to purchase these, our merchants carried abroad our cottons, woollens, hardware, and other articles. For that which we produced most easily, the foreigner gave us the things in which the facility of production was on his side; and thus both parties were benefited. The folly of the protective system must therefore be apparent. Those who thought that by purchasing of the foreigner we deprived our own countrymen of a demand for their productions, forgot that for every pound's worth of goods purchased abroad, the foreigner necessarily took a pound's worth of our products, while the trade could not go on unless it were profitable to both sides. Even if gold, instead of our goods, were our mode of payment, the case was precisely the same; because, as England is not a gold-producing country, it could only obtain supplies of the precious metals by sending goods, in the first instance, to exchange for

them. The notion that it was better to bring back in exchange gold and silver for our own use was also for ever exploded. It was shown that gold and silver differ in no wise from other commodities; that for the purposes of coin, and for working up in the arts, we require so much of the precious metals annually, and no more; and that the merchant will always know better than the Legislature, from the state of the markets, when and in what quantities to bring them. In short, it was fully demonstrated that the interests of the merchant must be those of the nation, and that for the prosperity of our trade it required nothing but that he should be free to export and import, according to his own judgment of the supply and the demand in the markets.

The history of the great commercial reform in England may be divided into four periods: the first, in which Mr. Huskisson took so prominent a part, extending from 1822 to 1830; the second from 1830 to 1840, which may be regarded as a continuation of that movement; the third, began in 1840, chiefly characterised by the repeal of the Corn Laws, and for ever associated with the names of Mr. C. P. Villiers, Mr. Cobden, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Bright, and Lord John Russell; the last, extending from the repeal of the Corn Laws, in 1846, to the present time, and represented in the person of Mr. Gladstone. Symptoms of the coming change had, indeed, been seen before these periods. Pitt had, in 1787, effected a considerable improvement in the tariff and excise laws. The greatest of his commercial reforms was undoubtedly his consolidation of the Customs Act, in 1787. Previously to that time, customs duties were paid according to a book of rates published in the reign of Charles II., and a new book of rates published in the reign of George I. Besides these, however, many new duties had, from time to time, been added, with innumerable complicated regulations. "The evil," says Mr. Macculloch, "was increased by the careless manner in which the new duties were added to the old—a per-centage being sometimes added to the original tax, while at other times the commodity was estimated by a new standard of bulk, weight, number, or value, and charged with an additional impost, without reference to the duties formerly imposed. The confusion arising from these sources was still further augmented by the special appropriation of each of the duties, and the consequent necessity of a separate collection for each. The intricacy and annoyance inseparable from such a state of things proved a serious injury to commerce, and led to many frauds and abuses." Such was the care which the Legislature, under the Georges, took of that British commerce which was recognised then as the best sign of the nation's strength. Langham's "Nett Duties and Drawbacks," published about a century since, contains upwards of three thousand distinct articles with infinite fractional duties assigned to them. The Custom House officer of those days was empowered to inquire into the exact nature and quality of everything that came under his eye in the way of imported goods. He was expected to know all shades and differences of strange, outlandish products, from "buffins, Mocadoes and Lisle grams," to

such uncouth commodities as alligars, allibanics, brawls, carridarries, chucklaes, cushtaes, and cuttanees. He was to have his eye on endless articles, which Englishmen were on no account to be permitted to buy. He was to look into all foreign books for a smack of Popish doctrine, which rendered them at once unlawful merchandise. In the matter of brown holland, for an example of his duties, he was carefully to distinguish between Bay holland, Brabant holland, brown holland proper, Embden cloth, Flemish cloth, Gentish cloth, Isingham cloth, Oversisils cloth and others, while these again were nicely to be distinguished according to their breadth. Of paper alone there were no less than sixty varieties. Among these figured atlas ordinary, blue royal, sugar-bakers' blue, cap paper, chancery paper, medium fine, Genoa fine, bastard or double copy, German printing, crown, Lombard, Genoa pot, ordinary pot, superfine pot, and second pot, royal paper, super-royal, Rochelle paper, Holland paper, and ordinary royal. All these were rated, as, indeed, were all the three thousand articles in the list, in minute fractional sums—as for instance, atlas ordinary at fifteen shillings and fourpence, and $21\frac{1}{2}$ hundredths of a penny per ream, besides additional rates. Blue royal, the next on the list, was to pay six shillings and threepence and $97\frac{1}{2}$ hundredths of a penny; sugar bakers' blue, five shillings and $97\frac{1}{2}$ hundredths of a penny; cap paper, three shillings and threepence, and 54 hundredths and three-eighths of a hundredth of a penny; and so on to the end of the tariff. Among other absurdities "babies, or puppets for children" (dolls), were charged on importation with a duty of three shillings and fivepence, and $19\frac{1}{2}$ hundredths of a penny per gross, with a bounty paid on re-exportation per gross of three shillings and eleven and a quarter hundredths of a penny. "Babies heads of earth" and "jointed babies" were rated at sums altogether different, but equally minute.

From these specimens of the legislative wisdom of our forefathers, it may be seen how largely commerce was indebted to Mr. Pitt for sweeping away all the old customs duties by three thousand distinct resolutions, and substituting in their place one single duty on each article, equivalent to the aggregate of the duties by which it had previously been visited. Unlike his political contemporary, Fox, who held political economy in contempt, as the silliest of all attempts to found a new moral science, the son of the great Lord Chatham had imbibed some of the views of the "Wealth of Nations." There can be little doubt but that for the outbreak of the war with France, he would have carried still further these wise measures. We have already given some account of his liberal treaty negotiated with France in 1786. In 1792 he announced a surplus revenue, which permitted him to diminish the duties upon articles consumed by the poorer classes. But the kind of crusade against the growth of what was called "French principles," or the doctrines of the French Revolution, which the frenzied pamphlets of Burke at this time awakened, rapidly threw into the shade all such pacific and benevolent schemes. The war, which for more than twenty

years deluged Europe in blood, soon brought the minister into financial difficulties. Instead of continuing his customs reforms, by which the trade with France which we have just seen spring up under the effects of Mr. Cobden's treaty might have been established more than sixty years since, probably to have attained in these days gigantic proportions, Pitt was compelled to raise the duties. At the close of the war in 1814, the greater part of all foreign merchandise had to pay three kinds

said to have gained a few steps. The union of England with Ireland had brought with it a somewhat more liberal system of trade between the two countries. The system of bonded warehouses, which Sir Robert Walpole had failed to establish, was carried out in a modified form in 1803. In 1813 the great monopoly of the East India Company was partially broken through; and the East India trade was for the first time thrown open to the spirit of enterprise of private individuals. The company



COLONEL PERRONET THOMPSON, AUTHOR OF THE "CATECHISM OF THE CORN LAWS," &C.

of customs dues—the permanent imposts, the temporary war duties, equal to two-thirds of the former, and finally an additional tax, which amounted also to two-thirds of the permanent imposts on all French goods, by way of reprisal for Napoleon's "Berlin Decrees," which excluded British commerce from the entire Continent. On other foreign goods these additional dues amounted to one-fourth only of the permanent imposts. During that dark period of our domestic annals, certain restrictions had indeed been removed, and free trade may be

however, preserved the monopoly of the trade with China, including the monstrous privilege of being the sole channel through which the English public were permitted to obtain their supplies of tea. In 1814, the number of articles of which the importation was absolutely prohibited numbered about two hundred; and it is stated in the report of the select committee of the House of Commons in 1820, that the Acts of Parliament on this subject in force in 1815, amounted to no less than eleven hundred, to which many additions had since been made. The British

merchant was naturally bewildered amidst this mass of prohibitions, restrictions, and statutory regulations. Instead of being able to undertake his operations, and avail himself of new channels of trade as they arose, he was compelled to obtain the advice of skilful lawyers before he could be sure that he was not about to incur some formidable penalties. When it is remembered that a trivial, unintentional deviation from the strict letter of the Acts of Parliament exposed ship and cargo to seizure, always attended with delay and expense, and frequently with long litigation, it cannot be doubted that such a state of things had a most injurious influence on British mercantile enterprise, and tended, as all such interferences with commerce do, to render commodities dearer.

All these evils would probably have flourished much longer than they did, but for the attention called to the vicious character of our commercial laws by the crowning abuse of the Corn Law which existed from the year 1815 up to the year 1846. To understand that law, its glaring injustice, and its pernicious effects on the welfare of the poorer classes, it is necessary to take a view of the history of legislation in England affecting corn. Cruel as was the spirit of the Statute of Labourers, the legislators of Edward III.'s reign had not hit upon the device of making the food of the people artificially dear for the benefit of landowners. On the contrary, the laws respecting the corn trade before that period, though mistaken and mischievous in their tendency, were at least intended for the benefit of the poor. In the earliest times the merchants had been practically free, both to bring in corn when our own harvests were deficient, and to send it abroad when superabundant; but at the period referred to regulations began to be made for restricting the trade. These regulations, however, seldom interfered with importation. Generally, the idea of our rulers had been to keep the food of the people cheap, by making it unlawful to export our own produce. In the seventeenth century a new system was adopted. In 1689, under the pretence of promoting the interests of agriculture, but really, as may easily be perceived, for the benefit of English landlords, the legislature came to the extraordinary determination of encouraging the sending away of the produce of our fields by positive bribes to the exporter. It was settled that, however abundant the harvest with which the country might be blessed, the people ought not to get any wheat for less than 48s. a quarter. To insure this result, it was enacted that whenever wheat began to get below that price, the carrying it out of the country should be deemed a meritorious action, and that the exporter should be rewarded out of the taxes with a present of five shillings for every quarter of wheat so carried away. Similar regulations were made in respect to barley, oats, and rye, by which the very poorest class who ate bread made from those inferior kinds of grain, were equally prevented from sharing the blessing of an abundant season. A previous act, passed in 1670, prevented the importation of foreign wheat, whenever corn had not reached the famine price, for those days, of 53s. 4d. a quarter.

Of course, under these circumstances, growing corn at home became for awhile so good a business, that rents rose everywhere. In fact, the whole amount thus wrung from the consumers of bread throughout the kingdom came ultimately, not to the farmers, and still less to the miserable class of agricultural labourers, but into the pockets of that landed interest so largely represented in the Parliaments which passed and maintained these unjust enactments. For the first sixty-six years of the last century the export of our corn was very great. In one year alone it reached nearly one million of quarters, or about one-fourth of the whole average produce of the country; and in ten years the exporters received in the shape of bounties, or Government rewards for their pains, upwards of one million and a half sterling. From 1697 to 1773, nearly thirty-one millions of quarters were thus exported, and upwards of six millions sterling were paid in bounties. In 1773, the peck loaf having reached the high price of 2s. 6d., a slight change for the better was for awhile established. Foreign wheat was allowed to be brought in on paying a nominal duty of sixpence, but the people were permitted no relief from high prices till corn had reached at least 48s. a quarter. At the same time it was settled that exportation was to cease when the price had reached 44s.—an interference with trade which was at least well intentioned, although now recognised as belonging to a kind of legislation which does far more harm than good. This statute also permitted the importation of corn duty free, if intended to be again exported; but the corn was, in the interval, to be kept closely locked up under the joint custody of the king and the importer, and every other precaution was taken that it should on no account be used in feeding our own people. Foreign corn now began to be brought in, and wheat continued steady at about 45s. a quarter. In 1790, however, the old system was partially returned to, and in 1804 a still worse change was effected.

In that year a Committee of the House of Commons reported that "the price of corn from 1791 to 1803 had been very irregular;" and added, "the casual high prices, however, have had the effect of stimulating industry, and bringing into cultivation large tracts of waste land, which, combined with the two last productive seasons, and other causes, have occasioned such a depression in the value of grain, as, it is feared, will greatly tend to the discouragement of agriculture, unless maintained by the support of Parliament." A bill was, in consequence, brought in by Mr. Western, and an act passed, by which a duty was imposed of 24s. 3d. per quarter, when the price should be at or under 63s.; and 2s. 6d. per quarter, when at or above that rate and under 66s.; and 6d. when above 66s. The consequence of this law was instantly to raise the price of food throughout the country; and the bad harvest of that year still further increased the sufferings of the people. The price of bread was more than doubled—the Legislature was flooded with petitions setting forth the evils of the new tax, but without effect.

Mr. Francis stated, in the course of the debate of

13th May, 1805, that "when the bill passed, the price of bread was not more than eightpence or ninepence the quartern loaf, and in about a month after it rose to sixteen or seventeen pence;" but the House determined by large majorities that the rise had nothing to do with the new law, and all petitions on the subject were ordered to lie on the table. Colonel Stanley in vain represented the extent of the complaints against the bill in the manufacturing parts of Lancashire. In vain Sir Robert Peel, the father of that Peel whose name was afterwards to be for ever associated with the repeal of these iniquitous laws, told the House that "the manufacturing interest should be supported against foreign competition by supplying the necessities of workmen at a reasonable rate," and that "a temporary depression of the farmer's profits ought not to be made the cause of a permanent burden on the consumer." Mr. Coke, the great agriculturist of Norfolk, was naturally "against any further discussion being had on the subject." Mr. Western, a gentleman who is described in the "Index to the House of Commons" of that time as possessing large landed property in Essex, praised the working of the act, because, under the shelter of its provisions, "a man who employed his capital in agriculture might safely conclude on deriving an adequate profit from it, and in this manner be put upon a fair footing with the manufacturer." Sir J. Newport opposed the motion for a committee of inquiry, because "he thought, whenever this subject was discussed, speculations took place which were injurious;" which was no doubt true from the landlord's point of view.

The period which followed was one of ruin to the poorer classes, but of uninterrupted prosperity for the landowners. The enormous expenditure of the war pressed heavily upon industry. Pauperism increased rapidly, and the price of food grew higher and higher. In 1812, owing to bad harvests, and the enormous expense of importation, wheat rose to £7 15s. the quarter, and bread riots were consequently common in various parts of the country. It is a singular proof of the blindness of class interests, that, under these alarming circumstances, the landowners had no remedy to suggest but new barriers against the importation of foreign corn. Owing to the very high prices which had prevailed, the law for some time had had practically little effect in keeping out foreign grain; but the prospect of a sudden collapse was too serious to be regarded complacently by the agricultural party. Sir H. Parnell, the chairman of a committee appointed to inquire into the subject in 1813, complained that, during the previous twenty-one years, "fifty-eight millions sterling had been paid to foreign countries for corn"—a fact, of course, rather consolatory than otherwise, at least from the consumer's point of view, as it showed how much the pressure of our own bad harvests had been diminished by foreign supplies. Finally, the committee recommended that no foreign corn should be allowed to come in until our own had reached 9s. a quarter, and that even then all importations should be discouraged by a regularly increasing duty. This proposition, however, was strenuously opposed by several members, on the ground that "the real object was, by

raising the price of grain, to increase the rents of land, and prevent many thousand persons in every parish from procuring bread, already too high, by their daily labour." This motion, however, though for the present laid aside, sufficiently indicated the temper of the legislature. In truth, as far as the landowners were concerned, there had hitherto been no immediate necessity for the bill, as the war maintained prices so high that foreign corn could not be kept out, however burdened with duties. The war, however, was manifestly drawing to a close, from the almost complete exhaustion of the military resources of France, and the anxiety of the landlords naturally increased. In 1813 the harvest was everywhere abundant, and after the opening of the ports of the Continent the price of corn fell rapidly, till about the end of the year it was scarcely half the price which it had maintained in 1812. The consternation of the landlords was complete. The cry of agricultural distress was heard throughout the land; but the poorer classes—so long kept upon the extreme brink of famine—suddenly found a joyful relief. What they had suffered throughout that dark period, when landowners were rejoicing over high rents, and the farmers who paid them foolishly toasted at their festivals, "The prosperity of agriculture, the true strength of the country," may be inferred from the innumerable projects for their relief which fill the papers and magazines of the time. Few of them, however, reached the true source of the evil. So little had the great truths of economical science then taken root in the minds of political and social writers, that many persons, undoubtedly sincere, recommended schemes which must inevitably have augmented the evils they were intended to cure. Others made suggestions which were simply harmless. One gentleman, who patriotically signed himself "An Englishman," undertook "to obviate the scarcity of corn in future," adding, "The thing is easy: we have only to offer a bounty on Irish-grown wheat; and in a few years they would not know what a bog was, nor should we have to fear a scarcity. The millions that are now sent to the north of Europe, America, and even to France, would render Ireland the granary of England, would enrich her farmers, employ her poor, and in the course of fifty years completely change the face of the country, and the manners and politics of the inhabitants. Irishmen would be happy, and Englishmen no longer obliged to act unworthy of their characters for a morsel of bread."

Another writer, signing himself "Philanthropist," sends to the "Gentleman's Magazine"—for unhappily there was no "Poor Man's Magazine" in those days to speak the voice of the people on this subject—a sketch of a virtuous family of his acquaintance who were doing their best to mitigate the sufferings of the poor. "They make a distinction," he says, "between the bread consumed by the family and the servants; that for the family being baked in tins, as the servants cannot then lay their own profusion on the parlour. They never suffer a loaf to be cut until after the second or third day of baking; for when eaten new, the consumption is greater, and much waste is occasioned. No toast is permitted; for the same portion cut into bread-and-butter goes one-third farther. No

rolls, French bread, or muffins, as all these are needless incentives to appetite. No more cut for dinner than absolutely requisite; for which, one piece, half an inch thick, of a round cut in four, will be found sufficient for each. By this means all broken pieces are prevented. No flour used in pies and puddings; for which rice, variously prepared, will prove an excellent substitute." To such a pass as this had the destructive wars, and the artificial barriers for keeping out food-supplies brought the people of England, and such were the remedies which the social philosophers of that time had to recommend. Meanwhile, the landlords pursued their favourite object of restraining importations of foreign corn. The complaint of agricultural distress was certainly not without some foundation. The landlords, who could no longer obtain the high rents of previous years, were undoubtedly worse off than before; the farmers, or at least those who had taken leases in reliance upon the continuance of high prices, were also injured; but the high prices were a national misfortune, which they had no right to expect to be permanent, and it is doubtful whether the great bulk of agricultural labourers were affected by the alleged distress. Nevertheless, committees of both Houses of Parliament were appointed in 1814, to inquire into the subject of their grievances. The witnesses examined being chiefly connected with agriculture, were, of course, unanimous in describing the act of 1804 as not sufficiently prohibitory of foreign supplies. Some suggested 120s. as the lowest limit at which the British people should be permitted to purchase corn elsewhere than of themselves. The general opinion, however, seems to have been that 80s. was a sufficient limit, and in 1815 a bill was introduced to that effect.

Thus was laid the foundation of that system which was only finally overthrown thirty years later by the vigorous opposition of the Anti-Corn-Law League. The law of 1815 caused intense excitement throughout the country. In our narrative of events for that year we have given an account of that measure and of the circumstances attending its enactment, but some facts of importance may be added here. Petitions against the bill were stated to have been signed by 800,000 persons. Sir Francis Burdett presented a petition signed by 42,473 inhabitants of Westminster. A petition of the City of London to the House of Commons presented an extraordinary number of signatures, upwards of 40,000 having, it was said, been obtained within ten hours. The petition of the City to the Lords comprised 80,000 signatures. The Court of Common Council came to a resolution to petition the Prince Regent to withhold his assent, and the petition was presented by the Lord Mayor in state. A series of formidable riots took place in the metropolis. A large crowd assembled at the doors of the House of Commons, inveighing against the Corn Bill and the members who supported it. An order to clear the passages of the House was executed with difficulty. Several of the mob acquainted with the persons of the members pointed them out, and hooting or applause followed as the member was known to be friendly or adverse to the bill. The late Mr. Croker stated that he

had been stopped at the entrance to the House, seized by the collar, and struck several blows. Sir William Garrow, in order to avoid the crowd, endeavoured to get to his house through Westminster Hall; but he was stopped and asked his name, and only got away after much difficulty. The high bailiff of Westminster and two magistrates deposed that the crowd outside the House was too great to be dispersed by the civil force; and that upon communicating with the Speaker, they had received orders to call in the Horse Guards. The soldiers suppressed the tumult, but the riots continued in other parts of the town. The populace broke the windows, and in some cases broke into the houses and destroyed the furniture of a great number of peers and members of Parliament, in various parts of London, known to be friendly to the bill. Two persons were shot during the riots, and a boy wounded, and a proclamation was issued offering a reward of £100 for the conviction of any person who had taken a part in the disturbances. But the legislature paid little attention to these manifestations of popular indignation. The bill was hurried through Parliament, the Earl of Liverpool declaring that if the House meant to legislate, they should legislate at once; that their pace ought neither to be quickened nor retarded by the clamour out of doors; that the injury which the country was sustaining from indecision and procrastination was very great, and that many estates could not be sold, and many farms could not be let, till it was known decisively what course Parliament intended to pursue. The bill was accordingly carried by immense majorities in both Houses; but not without an enlightened protest from ten members of the House of Peers, said to have been drawn up by Lord Grenville. This remarkable document which, it must be remembered, was not the work of corn law repealers, or professional agitators, set forth, among other things, the following reasons for being opposed to the new law:—"Because we are adverse on principle to all new restraints on commerce. We think it certain that public prosperity is best promoted by leaving uncontrolled the free current of national industry; and we wish rather, by well-considered steps, to bring back our commercial legislation to the straight and simple line of wisdom, than to increase the deviation by subjecting additional and extensive branches of the public interest to fresh systems of artificial and injurious restrictions. . . . To compel the consumer to purchase corn dearer at home than it might be imported from abroad, is the immediate practical effect of this law. In this way alone can it operate. Its present protection, and its promised extension to agriculture, must result (if at all) from the benefits which it creates by keeping up the price of corn to an artificial level."

Happily, abundant harvests served, for some years, to defeat the intended effects of these regulations. The agriculturists pressed for more stringent laws, and several alterations were introduced in their favour, but farmers were little benefited by these changes. In fact, however beneficial to the landlords, the corn laws had done little good for them. They had

converted farming into a kind of gambling, in which the gain fluctuated enormously from year to year, to the ruin of thousands who were daring enough to speculate in the growing or in the sale of grain. This, indeed, having regard solely to the interests of the people, was by far the worst feature in these laws. As long as Englishmen are permitted to buy and sell corn where they please, it is impossible that its price can vary very greatly. On occasions of a bad harvest in our small island, the harvests of the whole world are open for our relief. Even if the failure were general in Europe, the vast fields of Canada and the United States are ever ready, upon a slight rise in the profits of the export trade, to send almost unlimited supplies. In like manner, the liberty to export saves the farmer in years of special abundance from the ruinous fall in prices which must result from being compelled to dispose of all his produce for home consumption. It is very different under a restricted trade. The harvest of one year may be only half that of the previous year, or *vice versâ*. Compelled, therefore, to buy of no one but the English landlord, it is not to be wondered at that neither buyer nor seller could predict the price of corn from year to year. Wages, of course, could not vary with every fluctuation in the price of food, and if they did it is easy to perceive that when the supply of corn was enormously deficient, some one must go without; and, of course, this would not be the wealthier class, to whom a rise in the price of bread, however great, is always a matter comparatively unimportant. It is true that, under extreme pressure, the Government found it impossible to face the effects of these laws, and were compelled by order in council to permit, under heavy restrictions, importations of grain. But this only increased the confusion, and added to the danger of dealing in corn. The cry of the farmers, therefore, was not without reason; but where the evil really lay was seen by few except those theoretical writers whom practical statesmen generally affect to despise.

Free trade ideas had, however, really made great progress since the termination of the war. The plea for commercial liberty began to be heard, even within the walls of Parliament. It was no longer urged on the narrow grounds of the manufacturing interest; but on those higher principles of morality and justice, and on that enlightened view of the national welfare which ultimately ensured its success. In 1820 a petition was presented to Parliament from the merchants of London, which marks an important epoch in the history of these reforms. The petition was drawn up by Mr. Tooke, the author of "The History of Prices," who remarks that the doctrines expounded by Adam Smith, though occasionally referred to in controversial tracts on the corn trade and other branches of commerce, had not before this year been distinctly brought under the notice of Parliament and the public, with a view to the general adoption of them as the basis of legislation on commerce. The chief clauses of the petition were as follows:—

"Sheweth that foreign commerce is eminently conducive to the wealth and prosperity of a country, by

enabling it to import the commodities for the production of which the soil, climate, capital, and industry of other countries are best calculated; and to export, in payment, those articles for which its own situation is better adapted.

"That freedom from restraint is calculated to give the utmost extension to foreign trade, and the best direction to the capital and industry of the country.

"That the maxim of buying in the cheapest market, and selling in the dearest, which regulates every merchant in his individual dealings, is strictly applicable as the best rule for the trade of the whole nation.

"That a policy founded on these principles would render the commerce of the world an interchange of mutual advantages, and diffuse an increase of wealth and enjoyments among the inhabitants of each state.

"That, unfortunately, a policy the very reverse of this has been, and is, more or less, adopted and acted upon by the Government of this and of every other country, each trying to exclude the productions of other countries, with the specious and well-meant design of encouraging its own productions; thus inflicting on the bulk of its subjects, who are consumers, the necessity of its submitting to privations in the quantity or quality of commodities, and thus rendering what ought to be the source of mutual benefit and of harmony among states, a constantly recurring occasion of jealousy and hostility.

"That the prevailing prejudices in favour of the protective or restrictive system may be traced to the erroneous supposition that every importation of foreign commodities occasions a diminution or discouragement of our own productions to the same extent; whereas it may be clearly shown that, although the particular description of production which could not stand against unrestrained foreign competition would be discouraged, yet as no importation could be continued for any length of time without a corresponding exportation, direct or indirect, there would be an encouragement, for the purpose of that exportation, of some other production to which our situation might be better suited; thus affording at least an equal, and probably a greater, and certainly a more beneficial, employment to our own capital and labour.

"That of the numerous protective and prohibitory duties of our commercial code, it may be proved that, while all operate as a very heavy tax on the community at large, very few are of any ultimate benefit to the classes in whose favour they were originally instituted; and none to the extent of the loss occasioned by them to other classes.

"That, among the other evils of the restrictive or protective system, not the least is that the artificial protection of one branch of industry, or source of production, against foreign competition, is set up as a ground of claim by other branches for similar protection; so that, if the reasoning upon which these restrictive or prohibitory regulations are founded were followed out consistently, it would not stop short of excluding us from all foreign commerce whatsoever.

And the same train of argument, which, with corresponding prohibitions and protective duties, should exclude us from foreign trade, might be brought forward to justify the re-enactment of restrictions upon the interchange of productions (unconnected with public revenue) among the kingdoms composing the union, or among the counties of the same kingdom.

"That an investigation of the effects of the restrictive system at this time is peculiarly called for, as it may, in the opinion of your petitioners, lead to a strong presumption that the distress which now so generally prevails is considerably aggravated by that system, and that some relief may be obtained by the earliest practicable removal of such of the restraints as may be shown to be most injurious to the capital and industry of the community, and to be attended with no compensating benefit to the public revenue."

More than half the court of directors of the Bank of England signed this petition, which, probably, forty years earlier would have been regarded as a strong evidence of the lunacy of its framer. A number of eminent merchants of the city of London also added their names; and a deputation upon the subject waited upon Lord Liverpool, then the head of the Administration. The Premier, after reading the petition aloud, replied as follows:—"Gentlemen, there is not a principle, not a sentiment in the paper I have now read in which I do not entirely and most cordially concur; and if I had to legislate for this country *de novo*, or for a country like the United States of America, having little or no public debt, these are the principles upon which I would act. But in this country, which is burdened with so heavy a debt, in which so many vested interests have grown up, and are so connected and complicated with the existing commercial system, the case is very different, and the question of any change in that system ought not to be approached but with the utmost caution. I cannot, therefore, on the part of the Government, hold out the prospect of any great or immediate alteration." The free trade petition was, however, presented to the House of Commons by a merchant, Mr. Alexander Baring (afterwards Lord Ashburton), on the 8th of May, 1820; and similar petitions from Glasgow and Manchester were presented during the same month. It is a curious fact that the present Earl of Derby, then Lord Stanley, who subsequently became the leader of the Protectionist party, spoke in favour of the petition from Manchester, adding—"I hope that the liberal and enlightened views of the petitioners on the subject of our commercial policy will be acted upon. Whenever any such measure shall be brought forward, I will give it every support in my power." "There cannot," says Mr. Tooke, "be any reasonable doubt that the merchants' petition may be considered as having been the originating impulse to the movement which by progressive steps has led to the final establishment of the principles therein enunciated as the rule of conduct to be followed in the commercial legislation of this country."

The petitions led to the appointment of committees of both Houses of Parliament to inquire into the state of

our foreign trade. Their reports, presented in 1820 and 1821, did essential service, by presenting a mass of evidence on the impolicy of the existing laws, such as had never been collected before. Nor was the language of the committee, in their comments on the evidence, less encouraging. "Your committee," says one report, "beg to observe that without now questioning the wisdom of a restrictive or protective policy as necessary to the state of our trade at an earlier period of our history, as applicable to the circumstances of the present day, it appears very doubtful. The time when monopolies could be successfully supported, or would be patiently endured, either in respect to subjects against subjects, or particular countries against the rest of the world, seems to have passed away." They added, however, "Your committee are sensible that at once to abandon the prohibitory system would be of all things the most visionary and dangerous. It has long subsisted; it is the law not only of this kingdom, but of the rest of the European world; and any sudden departure from it is forbidden by every consideration of prudence, safety, and justice. No such sudden change is in the contemplation of your committee; nor, indeed, the adoption of any change, without the utmost circumspection and caution." The various improvements in our tariff introduced during Lord Liverpool's administration, are sketched in the next chapter; and though these may seem of small importance compared with the sweeping changes of twenty years later, their value in dispelling the illusions under which even our most liberal statesmen laboured on these subjects was, nevertheless, very great. The labours of Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Canning certainly contributed more than those of any other statesmen to prepare the way for the final triumph. The reduction of the duties on coals, and of the oppressive excise dues on salt; the alteration in the duties upon silk; the various other remissions during this period of taxes, which, though not strictly protective duties, weighed heavily on our commerce, all marked the new spirit of the times.

The Protectionist party were now thoroughly alarmed; for though the corn laws were not for the present in question, their abolition was necessarily involved in the success of the free trade party. It must not be forgotten that the tariff of that time was not merely beneficial to the landlord from the restrictions on the corn trade. Innumerable articles were comprised in it which were wholly or in part the produce of agricultural industry. The heavy duties on cattle and salted meats, on leather, boots and shoes, timber, butter, tallow, cheese, cider, eggs, flax, hair, hides, lard, perry, potatoes and other kitchen vegetables, hay, seeds of all kinds, wool, and other articles, were all beneficial to the proprietors of land, who were, of course, sheltered by these barriers against foreign competition at the expense of their fellow-countrymen who purchased such articles. That the landed interest, now awakened, would band together for the preservation of these artificial regulations was to be expected. A wise and far-seeing view of their interests would no doubt have dictated a different policy.

BREAD RIOT AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, 1815.



Happily, the interests of the manufacturing and agricultural classes are so interwoven that it is hardly possible to benefit the one without improving the circumstances of the other; nor could a system which contributed to keep the great bulk of the people in poverty; really be beneficial either to the farmer or the landed gentry. The pauperism of the country was, during the early part of this century, an evil which burdened the land with constantly increasing poor-rates, and threatened to eat up the profits of all industry. Those sudden fluctuations in the price of food were not difficulties which passed away and left no trace save in the remembrance of the privations which they had brought upon the people. Every fresh year of dearth left a new stratum of pauperism, from which only the most self-reliant afterwards extricated themselves. Between the position of an independent labourer and that of the recipient of parish relief there is an enormous gulf. That horror of the workhouse, so conspicuous in the labouring classes of our country, is, as a rule, permanently weakened after one lapse into the miserable condition of pauperism. This was the condition to which those laws which had been passed from a mistaken view of class interest were bringing the country—their advocates being forgetful of the fact that a prosperous people are the best customers of the farmer; and that the growth of an industrious population in the long run is the true cause of extended cultivation, improved husbandry, and higher rents.

Sir Henry Parnell, in the third edition of his celebrated work on financial reform, published in 1832, gives a clear and forcible account of the evils of our laws for protecting British agriculture, as then existing, after all the extensive reforms of the previous twenty years. The duties imposed for the purpose of promoting the interests of landowners, by excluding foreign competition, then comprised no less than thirty-eight distinct articles—in addition to positive prohibitions upon the importation of beef, lambs, mutton, pork, sheep, and swine. At that time the state of the markets abroad showed that in the fifteen years since the passing of the Corn Law of 1815, wheat might have been sold in England on an average at ten shillings a quarter cheaper than it had been during the whole of that time. The effects of the laws in keeping up the price of other kinds of grain were no less striking. It was calculated that, during the period referred to, the consumers of corn in England had paid for that article nearly two hundred millions sterling more than they need have paid, if our merchants had been free to bring in the abundant supplies of other countries. To this loss must, of course, be added all that had been paid for meat, fresh and salted, cheese, butter, potatoes, and other articles of food beyond the price which free trade would have reduced them to. All this enormous sum was, necessarily, secured by the landowners, while rents throughout the country had more than doubled since the beginning of the century.

It must be confessed, however, that the landlords were not the only class for whose assumed benefit these restrictions were so obstinately defended. There were

a vast number of our home manufactures which were "protected" in a similar manner, on the false plea that British industry could not maintain its ground if brought into competition with the production of the foreigner. Wages being generally higher here than on the Continent, it was supposed that the foreigner could supply everything cheaper than our own people. Visions of a country purchasing everything it consumed of other nations, while its own population were idle and starving, rose before the view of the honest Protectionist at the mention of free trade. It was strangely forgotten that to buy of the foreigner means to send him our goods, as well as to take his, and that, therefore, buying with no selling is an impossibility. A glance at our tariff at any period will show that our foreign trade is not a mere system of importation—indeed, if the accounts could be relied on, the amount of goods taken of us by the foreigner exceeds what we buy of him. It is quite true that sudden changes might have been extremely injurious to the workmen of any particular trade. If, for instance, the people of England had found out that it was cheaper to get all the boots they wear by buying them of the French, with our cottons and woollens, the employment for weavers and spinners of cottons and woollens might be enormously increased, but English boot-making must come to an end. This, however, could, at most, be only a plea against effecting too suddenly a change which, in the end, must be beneficial to all parties. It is clearly better that our own population should be employed in making those things, for which we have the greatest natural facilities, than that we should make articles of necessity artificially dear, for the benefit of a class of producers who might be gradually absorbed into other and more profitable trades.

On the other hand, it must be confessed that the "protection" afforded by our tariff to the manufacturers, though scarcely less injurious in its effects, was wanting in those peculiar features which rendered the bread laws so odious in the eyes of thinking men. The rents of landlords were undoubtedly increased by the prohibition of foreign produce, because, the land of the country being limited in extent, they had a virtual monopoly of the means of supplying food. The profits of manufacturers, however, could never have been really augmented by the laws which shielded them from foreign competition, because they had no monopoly at all. To add to the number of acres of land in the country was impossible; but to double the number of manufactories in any particular trade only required the diversion of an additional portion of the national capital—a result which would inevitably have followed, if the profits of the protected manufacturers had been exceptionally high. In fact, it was seen by the advocates of free trade that the prohibition of foreign manufactures, while it took money from the pockets of the people, brought nothing to the English producer, who was simply paid more than the foreigner, when it really cost him more to produce the article. The case was the same as if our Government should prohibit the people from purchasing oranges brought from abroad. Some oranges would, probably, in

that case, be produced in English hothouses, and sold at prices enormously high; but of course these high prices would not render the cultivation of oranges in England more profitable than other businesses. The price, in fact, would only recompense the grower for the great expense and labour he had been put to in raising oranges in a climate naturally unfitted for their production. Considered from an economical point of view, this species of protection was even more objectionable than the landlord's taxes, because the high price benefited no class, and represented, in fact, mere waste; but it was, at least, free from that selfishness of monopoly which maintained the restrictions on supplies of food amid all the distress of severe winters, with limited employment.

CHAPTER LIII.

History of Free Trade (continued).—The Commercial Reforms during Lord Liverpool's Administration—Mr. Secretary Peel's support of Mr. Huskisson's Free Trade Measures—Circumstances which preceded the Corn Law of 1828—Mr. Canning's betrayal of the Free Traders—The Duke of Wellington's sudden change of views on Corn Law Repeal—Establishment of the Sliding Scale—The Excise and Stamp Law Reforms, 1830-1840; Mr. Goulbourn, Lord Althorp, Sir Henry Parnell—The Almanack Duty; Sketch of its History and Effects—The Pamphlet Duty—The Newspaper Stamp—Struggles for a Free Press—Early Advocates of Free Trade in Newspapers—Paper Duty—Candle Duty—Duty on Starch—Duty on Sweets and Mead; Folly of these Taxes proved by results of Repeal—Tariff Reforms—Coal Duty—Timber Duty—The Corn Law Question—Distress of the People—Severe Winter of 1838—Indifference of the Chartists to the Free Trade Movement—Selfishness of the Agricultural Interest—Mr. Villiers; his first Annual Motion for Inquiry into the Corn Laws—Debate of 15th March, 1838—Sir William Molesworth, the Marquis of Chandos, Sir H. Parnell, the Earl of Darlington, Mr. Clay, Mr. Gally Knight, Mr. Cayley—Mr. Disraeli's Defence of Protection—Apathy of the Country—Signs of Awakening.

At length the obvious truths which Adam Smith, Ricardo, and others so clearly demonstrated—that restriction and prohibitions upon trade tended, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, to divert the national industry of the country from its natural and profitable pursuits into artificial and less productive channels—were recognised by the statesmen of this country. When the principles of free trade were adopted, and openly avowed by Lord Liverpool's Administration, the question of the justice or injustice of the corn laws assumed a new shape. Some preliminary steps had been taken, under the auspices of Mr. Wallace and Mr. Robinson, for the relaxation of the restrictions upon trade in 1822, when several new laws had been proposed by the Government, and Committees of the House of Commons had sat for inquiry into other matters connected with the further emancipation of our industry from the legislative trammels with which it had been beset. But it was not till Mr. Huskisson brought forward his measure for altering the laws relating to the silk trade, in 1824, that the full extent of the plans of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet became known to the public; and the following session, in which he made his famous exposition of the colonial, commercial, and shipping policy of the country, and brought forward and carried Government bills for altering and reducing the tariff of duties upon almost every article of foreign manufacture, stamped the year 1825 as

the era of a commercial revolution, more important in its effects upon society than those political revolutions which have commanded so much more attention from the historian.

Without entering into minute details, the extent of the alteration in the restrictive system which from time immemorial had prevailed in this country, may be estimated by a few items. Foreign silk goods, which had been entirely prohibited, were admitted at a duty of 30 per cent. on their value. Woollens, which had been loaded with a duty of from £50 to £67 10s., were allowed to be imported at 20 per cent. On gloves the duty, which had been prohibitive, was reduced to 30 per cent. The duties on linens, fluctuating from 40 to 180 per cent., were reduced to 25 per cent.; and earthenware, which had enjoyed a protecting duty of 75 per cent., was admitted at the trifling duty of 5 per cent.

No one who is familiar with the details of the French tariff, as settled by Mr. Cobden's negotiations, can fail to be struck with the similarity of these features. In fact, as regards our commercial system, England had arrived in 1825 exactly at the stage which France, tardily following our example, has lately reached. It is possible that that country of vast resources is destined to tread the same path towards complete freedom; but in the land of the great Colbert—the Minister of Louis XIV., under whom the prohibitive system attained a development hitherto unknown in Europe—it is not to be wondered at that the numerous and powerful interests artificially created under the old pernicious system renders it extremely dangerous to the Government to attempt anything more than a gradual reform. "The result of the alterations," said Mr. Huskisson, "which I have stated to the committee will be, that upon foreign manufactured articles, where the duty is proposed to protect our own manufactures, and not for the purpose of collecting revenue, that duty will in no instance exceed thirty per cent. If the article be not manufactured much cheaper or much better abroad than at home, such a duty is ample for protection. If that is not sufficient, my answer is, that a greater protection is only a premium to the smuggler, and that there is no wisdom in attempting to bolster up any manufacture which this degree of protection will not sustain." These propositions, with others of an equally liberal character, affecting the trade of the country—such as the repeal of the Spitalfields Acts, and of the act against the emigration of mechanics—passed the Houses of Parliament with scarcely a dissentient voice, notwithstanding that the utmost alarm was felt by the parties from whom protection was to be thus withdrawn. The silk manufacturers were allowed, at the bar of the House of Commons, to urge their plea against what they believed to be the total sacrifice of their interests, and 11,000 journeymen weavers signed a petition to Parliament against the repeal of the Spitalfields Wages' Act. The arguments used in Parliament to prevent the success of the interested parties opposing these measures, were of the soundest and most liberal kind, and strongly antagonistic to anything

savouring of monopoly. Mr. Secretary Peel exhorted the House to firmness, reminding it that the eyes of Europe were upon it; and he warned Parliament how greatly those sound and irrefragable principles of commercial policy, which they had heard so ably advocated, would be prejudiced if it were to yield to the fears of the timid or the representations of the interested: *—a remarkable speech from the statesman who afterwards so strongly opposed the advocates of free trade, and finally, in the close of his career, returning to his early opinions, left a name for ever identified with the final triumph of these principles. It is remarkable, indeed, that the Ministry, who at this time substituted for the celebrated navigation laws of Charles II. the modern reciprocity system, released the colonial trade from some of the trammels of the mother country, gave the British mechanic the legal right to carry his labour to foreign markets, repealed the combination laws, and neutralised the laws which forbade the exportation of machinery, was that which boasted Lord Eldon for Lord Chancellor, and the Duke of Wellington for Master-General of the Ordnance. In fact, it was the high Tory Government, of which Lord Liverpool was the chief, which opened to the commerce of France and other countries a means of trading with Great Britain. Nor did any portion of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet affect to remain neuter. On the contrary, these principles of commercial freedom were recommended to the favourable consideration of Parliament by the King in his speech at the opening of the session of 1825.

The principles which had been so eloquently advocated with reference to silks, woollens, and other articles, were now boldly pronounced by some members of the House of Commons to be equally applicable to those still more necessary commodities, corn, cattle, and the like. It was even thought that the rule should have been applied to them in the first instance, and afterwards extended to those articles of manufacture into the price of which the food of the artisan must necessarily enter. Impressed with these views, Mr. Whitmore, a gentleman of ancient family and large landed property, who, to his great honour, was among the earliest advocates of corn law repeal, brought forward a motion for the revision of the corn laws a month after the promulgation of the views of the Ministry upon the subject of trade. He was, however, opposed by Mr. Huskisson, on the ground that the motion was ill-timed; but at the same time the latter stated that it would be necessary, at a future time, to revise these laws; and he added that several foreign countries were in distress owing to our exclusion of their corn, and that they had in revenge shut out our manufactures.† The tendency of these remarks left no doubt in the minds of the more ardent free traders that Mr. Huskisson would, at an early period on behalf of the Government, present to Parliament a bill for reducing the duties on agricultural produce; but on the assembling of Parliament the expectations of the public were greatly disappointed

at the announcement by Ministers that they did not intend during that session to propose any alteration in the existing law. Mr. Whitmore, however, again moved for a revision of the Corn Law. Mr. Huskisson, towards whom, as the champion of free trade, all eyes were now turned, avoided going into the discussion of the question, urging as a ground of postponement, that the last session of a Parliament was an unfit time for agitating so important a matter; and that he thought the subject ought to be reserved for the first session of the new Parliament. He pledged himself, however, to take the first favourable opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the whole subject. The commercial distress which prevailed in 1826, and the consequent want of employment for the manufacturing population, drew attention still more to the question of the Corn Law; and numerous petitions were presented at the meeting of Parliament for a reduction of the duty on foreign grain. During the recess Lord Liverpool and Mr. Huskisson had prepared a new Corn Bill, which, at the assembling of Parliament, the Cabinet resolved that Mr. Canning should introduce, in the absence of Mr. Huskisson, who was confined to his house by ill health. "But," says Mr. Cobden, in commenting on this fact, "whether his malady was occasioned by blighted hopes in finding himself forced at the behest of an insatiate and powerful aristocracy to adopt a scale of duties upon the first article of commerce prohibitive in all but the name, his biographer does not inform us." Nothing is more dangerous than the avowal of a great and comprehensive political principle by a selfish and partial government. It is like a two-edged sword, which, in its recoil, sometimes wounds the unskilful hand that wields it. The Administration of Lord Liverpool found themselves in this position, that after having in a great measure forced the free-trade policy upon the manufacturers and merchants of the country, after having thrown open our ports to the products of all the other manufacturing nations of the world, and removed from our statute book several hundred restrictive laws affecting the interests of the capitalists and workmen of the British empire and its colonies, they were now called upon to apply the same principle to the trade in corn. It was felt by the Cabinet which had passed those laws for withdrawing the heavy protections upon silk, linen, gloves, and other articles, that the cry raised throughout the country for a like removal of the monopoly enjoyed by the agricultural interest could no longer with decency be disregarded. On the 1st of March, 1827, Mr. Canning introduced the Government Corn Bill to the House of Commons; and so palpable and indisputable were the claims of justice, that the trade in corn should be placed under the same regulation as that in other commodities, that even this brilliant debater, whose whole political career had been marked by the talent for dazzling and diverting the minds of his hearers, did not upon this occasion venture upon the attempt to mislead them from the obvious conclusions of common sense. On the contrary, he avowed in the course of his speech, that

* Debate, 28th April, 1825. † Ibid.

"if the trade in corn was to be continued at all, it ought to be continued, as far as practicable, under the same principles as were applied to other species of trade. But when he came to unfold the Ministerial scheme, the free trade party were doomed to a bitter disappointment. Mr. Canning proposed that a duty of 20s. a quarter should be levied on foreign wheat when the price in the home market reached 60s.; the duty to diminish two shillings a quarter for every one shilling of increase in price, and to increase two shillings for every fall of one shilling in price. The result was to be that when the average price reached £3 10s. the quarter, all duty would cease; but on the other hand, when the price fell to £2 10s., the duty would be £2 a quarter. Mr. Canning's speech was full of professions of consideration for the landlords, by whom he was exclusively surrounded. He remarked, that if he were asked why he did not at once propose an absolute prohibition, he should answer that he did not think so strong a measure necessary either for the agricultural interest, or for the public generally—an observation which appeared to satisfy all but some ultra-zealots of the agricultural party, including Sir E. Knatchbull, Sir Thomas Lethbridge, and Lord Clive, who boldly declared for a complete monopoly. It is worth remembering that at this period, the vast towns of Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds, in which the demand for cheap food was loudest, had no voice in the legislature, which thus, as was remarked, "defended the principles of free trade to enable the peeresses to visit Almack's and the Drawing-rooms, in the laces and silks of Paris and Brussels, and repudiated the same principles when they were advocated merely to place the abundant corn and provisions of Russia, Poland, and the United States within the reach of the mechanics and labourers of England."

This Corn Bill, which passed the House of Commons without alteration, was afterwards destined to be marked in its progress by the most serious disasters. Lord Liverpool, who had given notice of the day on which he should introduce the Cabinet measure into the House of Lords, was in the interval visited by that illness which terminated in his death. He was, as our readers know, succeeded by Mr. Canning, from whose Cabinet an important section of the Liverpool Ministry seceded. The Duke of Wellington, the most influential of these seceders, now opposed in the House of Lords the very same measure which he himself, as a Cabinet Minister, must have previously assisted in preparing. The Bill was lost in the Upper House, and Mr. Canning's death followed soon afterwards. During the short-lived agitation of Lord Goderich which followed, there was no attempt at legislation on this momentous question; but the Duke of Wellington, who was next called to the head of the Government, lost no time in introducing the Corn Law which existed unmodified up to 1842.

It may here be mentioned that prominent among those who paved the way for the repeal of the corn laws, was the name of General, then Colonel, Perronet Thompson. Having served for some

time in the army, he subsequently became a man of letters and a politician. He contributed many of the ablest papers upon current questions that appeared in the *Westminster Review*; and twelve years before the corn law struggle commenced, he wrote the "Catechism of the Corn Laws," which contained the substance of all that was subsequently advanced by Mr. Cobden and his coadjutors.

Between 1830 and 1840 some beneficial changes in our commercial and fiscal laws were introduced. The immense benefits conferred on the people by the modifications of the excise duties, chiefly during this period, may be said to have astonished even the most ardent advocates of the emancipation of domestic industry from the blighting influence of the exciseman. But the most important result of these reforms was the proof which they afforded of the correctness of the theories advanced by Sir Henry Parnell on the elasticity of the revenue. Government now learnt that the laying of new burdens on the people is not always the way to benefit revenue. It was found that the diminished consumption, and, above all, the diminished employment for the people which followed the imposition of new duties, and the interference with industry which these new duties always brought with them, went far to defeat the objects with which they were imposed. In short, statesmen came, by degrees, to perceive the important truth that taxes may be taken off, and relief afforded to the people, with far less loss to the revenue than had previously been supposed. Mr. Goulbourn, who was avowedly a disciple of Sir Henry Parnell, relinquished in his budget of 1830 £3,110,000 of revenue, by sweeping away the complicated excise duties, ranging from 1s. 9d. to 9s. 10d. per barrel on beer; £411,000 more by abolishing the excise duties on hides and skins; and £55,000 further by other remissions. In 1831 Lord Althorp repealed the excise duty of 3½d. per yard on printed cotton yielding, on that portion of the printed cotton retained for home consumption, the enormous sum of £570,000 per annum, and, of course, operating enormously to diminish the amount of employment which was available for the Lancashire weavers and spinners. In 1832 £483,000 was relinquished on candles; in 1833 the soap duty was reduced one-half, at a loss to the revenue of £775,000. In 1834 the duty of 3½d. per pound on starch, yielding £117,000, was given up, and a reduction of 1s. per gallon, yielding £408,000, was made on Irish spirits. The Budget of 1836 gave up £572,000 by reductions or repeals of excise duties on paper and spirit licences, and £300,000 by reduction of stamp duty on newspapers.

It will probably be difficult for future generations to conceive the extreme folly of some of these taxes. Up to 1833 a tax, producing less than £30,000 per annum, was levied upon that useful little manual in daily life, the almanack. Miserable as this sum was, and scarcely paying the labour of collecting the duty and defending it from encroachment, it constituted, as far as the bulk of the people were concerned, an absolute prohibition, for the duty amounted to no less than 1s. 3d. on each copy.

Whether our forefathers regarded an almanack as a peculiarly dangerous and heretical publication does not appear; but it can hardly be believed that such a tax could have been devised save for the express purpose of preventing the use of almanacks throughout the kingdom. In France the almanack has always been made a vehicle of popular instruction and amusement. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the sale of publications of this kind, in every variety of form, reckons in that country by millions; and readers must be familiar with the names of comic almanacks, merchants' almanacks, and trade and class almanacks, of all kinds, which have sprung up in England since the remission of the duty. But the primary use of the almanack is, of course, its diary, an occasional reference to which can scarcely be dispensed with by any person, however humble his position in life. This, however, the Legislature thought fit to deny the people. A few almanacks, indeed, existed, which had regularly appeared for nearly two centuries; for the effect of all these unnatural restrictions is to destroy all enterprise, and to throw the whole production into one or two hands, constituting a virtual monopoly. Among the most important of these were those known as Moore's and Partridge's. The latter had borne on the title the words "By John Partridge," ever since the days of Swift, who published a well-known satirical account of the pretended death of Partridge, who claimed to be an astrologer. The Stationers' Company, who were the chief publishers of these almanacks, had originally claimed the sole right to issue publications of the kind, under a patent of monopoly granted by King James I.; and they appear to have enjoyed their privilege till the year 1775, when a bookseller having disputed its legality, the cause was decided against the company. Shortly afterwards, Lord North brought in a bill to legalise the privilege, but the House rejected the absurd proposal of the Ministers by a majority of 45. All these almanacks, except the "British Almanack," started, a few years before the repeal of the duty, by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, were wretched pamphlets, printed upon coarse paper, without a wrapper, and were filled with the jargon of astrology, and other puerile and useless matter, exactly as they had been in the days of Queen Anne. Although the matter they were composed of was far less than is now given in a single number of a penny journal, they were issued at the price of 1s. 10d. each copy. A copy of Partridge's almanack for the year 1815 bears the title "*Merlinus Liberatus: an Almanack for the Year of our Redemption 1815, being the third after Bissextile, or Leap Year, and from the Creation of the World, according to the best History, 5762, and the 127th of Our Deliverance by King William from Popery and Arbitrary Government, but the 137th from the Horrid Popish Jacobite plot; wherein are contained all things fitting and useful for such a work; as an Ephemeris of the Daily Motions of the Planets, with their various Configurations, Aspects, &c.; Remarks on the Divisions of the Heavens, with Judgments of the Eclipses and Seasons, handled accord-*

ing to the Rules of the Ptolomean Astrology, with many other things relating to the Truth of Astrology, calculated for the Meridian of London. By John Partridge. London: Printed for the Company of Stationers." The body of the publication was covered with "Observations," such as are now only to be met with in almanacks published for the most credulous and ignorant. For example: "Various intelligence arrives this month from most parts of Europe, and many nations are now consulting their future happiness; but there is cause to doubt there will not be that candour and humanity amongst them as might be." Moore's—the only other almanack, indeed, worth mentioning which existed up to a very short period before the repeal—was filled with similar absurdities; yet even business men were compelled to buy such trash, or go without the necessary information which it contained. Of course, the proprietors of these old-established almanacks strongly resisted any change. Notwithstanding, the duty was abolished; and the publication of almanacks sprang at once into an activity which astonished even the advocates of the abolition. The old-established almanacks doubled their circulation in the first year of their freedom from taxation; and more than 200 new ones started immediately on the repeal, of which no less than a quarter of a million of copies were sold. In the present day their circulation probably amounts to ten times that number. There is scarcely a country newspaper, or a cheap periodical, which does not publish its annual almanack; and throughout the country, tradesmen of every class adopt the plan of giving away almanacks to their customers, as a vehicle for advertising their wares. Scarcely a cottage or a servant's kitchen is now without its almanack hanging on the wall. Among the most curious results of the repeal is the multiplication of diaries, or almanacks ruled for daily memoranda, which, though little used thirty years ago, are now in great request among all persons who have engagements of any kind whatever.

The duty on pamphlets was no less objectionable for its vexatious and unproductive character; indeed, it is impossible to doubt that the object of this tax was not to increase the revenue, but simply to check this kind of publication. The duty on pamphlets was imposed in 1815, immediately after the passing of the infamous Corn Law of that year. The bill enacted that every book containing one whole sheet, and not exceeding eight sheets in octavo, or any lesser size, or not exceeding twelve sheets in quarto, or twenty sheets in folio, should be deemed a pamphlet; and imposed a duty of 3s. upon each sheet of one copy of all pamphlets published. Of course, such a trifling duty could only seriously affect the poorest class of publishers, and the cheapest kind of broadsheet, or similar popular publication. The whole amount produced by the duty was less than £1,000 per annum; but it gave the authorities the right to interfere with a species of publication which was frequently annoying to the Government, and on this ground the duty was maintained till 1833, when it was repealed.

The stamp on newspapers was a far more effectual bar to the spread of sound knowledge on political questions. If the people of England at the period under review were prejudiced and ignorant on the subject of those monopolies which lay at the root of their troubles, it was certainly less their fault than that of their rulers. Those who are now accustomed to buy an enormous sheet filled with news and original articles on public affairs for a penny, find it difficult to realise the fact that in 1836 every copy of a newspaper published throughout the kingdom paid a duty to Government of fourpence, signified by a little red stamp in one corner of the sheet. It was impossible

spendence, raise merchants in remote places toward an equality with those in the great marts, and wonderfully quicken all the movements of commerce." But newspapers, even under these heavy burdens, had become themselves a considerable commercial article in Great Britain. In the printing and distribution of them, and in the demand they created for paper, machinery, and other things, they already occasioned a large amount of industry. Of course, none but the comparatively wealthy purchased these high-priced papers. In 1833, when the population of the United States was very far less than at present, the total number of newspapers



RIGHT HON. C. P. VILLIERS, M.P.

at that period, without a violation of the stamp laws, to sell any newspaper for less than 7d. or 7½d. per copy—some were much higher priced. The *Spectator*—a journal which advocated with remarkable ability the principles of free trade—was published at 1s. It was not only political information which was thus restrained; "the numerous advertisements in newspapers, the variety of facts and information they contain," says Mr. McCulloch, "as to the supply and demand of commodities in all quarters of the world, their prices, and the regulations by which they are affected, render newspapers indispensable to commercial men, supersede a great mass of epistolary corre-

circulating in the Union was estimated at from 55,000,000 to 60,000,000; while the total number issued in Great Britain and Ireland, to a population of 74,000,000, was only 34,515,000. It is surprising, indeed, that so large a number should have been issued under restrictions so powerful. The fact can only be accounted for by the practice which largely prevailed of hiring papers, both weekly and daily, for a trifling payment per hour, and, in some cases, of combining for purchasing some particular journal. It is not to be wondered at that every kind of evasion of the stamp duty was attempted. "Owing to the great craving of the people for information on political sub-

jects," says Mr. Porter, "during the agitation which accompanied the introduction and passing of the Reform Bill, a great temptation was offered for the illegal publication of newspapers upon unstamped paper, many of which were sold in large numbers, in defiance of all the preventive efforts made by the officers of Government." The stamp duty placed the legally published journals beyond the reach of the working classes, who eagerly availed themselves of the low-priced papers offered; which, however inferior in quality they might be, gave, or professed to give, the information which was so eagerly sought. As it was felt to be impossible to put down the illegal publications, without having recourse to a system of harshness which might produce even more violent and more widely-spread feelings of dissatisfaction, the Government wisely gave way, and effectually and at once put an end to the illegal publications by reducing the duty from fourpence to a penny per sheet.

This change appears to have been effected less with a view to the benefits which subsequently resulted from it, than for the sake of putting down a contraband trade which had baffled all the devices of the law. A sort of unstamped newspaper war had long been maintained between the Government and the illegal publishers. The large powers given by the Acts of Parliament to the revenue officers were rigorously applied: printers' types, presses, and other stock in trade, were seized by armed forces of police and military, and destroyed, and the printers thrown into prison. The prisons in London and the provincial towns, particularly Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Hull, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, were seldom untenanted by some of the persons popularly called the "victims of the unstamped." Large numbers of women and very young persons were put in prison for selling by retail papers without a stamp. But all law, legal devices, severity, even the stretching of law to a point almost illegal, failed to repress the adventurers in unstamped papers. At this period 3s. 6d. had to be paid on every advertisement by which people were in the habit of communicating their wants to each other; in addition to this the compulsory stamp on each copy was 4d., and the duty on the pound of paper 3d. The *Examiner* newspaper—a journal which advocated the principles of free trade with remarkable ability—was the first journal which systematically called attention to press taxation, inscribing its price on the first page thus:—"Taxes on knowledge, 4d.; print and paper, 3d." One case, illustrating the crusade against this useful exercise of industry and capital, is worth mentioning. On the 9th of July, 1831, a newspaper was started by a writer named Hetherington, bearing on its front page the title—"The Poor Man's Guardian: a Weekly Newspaper for the People. Published contrary to 'law,' to try the power of 'Might' against 'Right.'" Notwithstanding the vigilance of the Government, this unlawful paper was continued till the 26th of December, 1835; and within this period 500 persons suffered imprisonment for selling it. Hetherington was four times convicted of publishing it—twice imprisoned for

six months. The frequent prosecution of the vendors of the *Poor Man's Guardian* compelled them to conduct the issue of the paper to the public with extreme caution. The sellers hid them in their hats, their pockets, or inside their shirts, and retailed them one by one, as opportunity offered; while the publishing office in the Strand was constantly watched by the police. Here amusing scenes often took place. Sham parcels were made up, and men and boys were started off with them at furious speed, the police following hard upon their heels. While this was going on at the front of the house, the real parcels were frequently sent off by a door at the back. Scouts were, therefore, constantly on the look-out as to the whereabouts of the police, and as the only telegram the publisher desired had reference to their movements, the issue took place by day or by night, as circumstances made this possible. Hetherington himself frequently entered the premises in the dress of a Quaker, and had to make his way out by the same way as the papers themselves.* He was at length brought to trial in the Court of Exchequer, before Lord Lyndhurst and a special jury. The trial took place on the 17th of June, 1834, the information being filed by Her Majesty's Attorney-General. Hetherington conducted his own defence, and the prosecution failed, the jury returning a verdict for the defendant, on the ground that they did not think that the *Poor Man's Guardian* came within the act.

The paper duty operated as a far more effectual clog upon literary industry. It was not until recently that this tax was entirely abolished, but the evils to which Mr. Gladstone put an end were only a trifling portion of those which existed still unreformed in 1835. The duty, which was calculated to vary from 30 to 200 per cent. *ad valorem*, had an injurious effect on many other trades besides that of the paper-maker. But the greatest evil of all was the high price of books which it occasioned. This placed a great obstacle in the way of the progress of knowledge, of useful and necessary arts, and of sober and industrious habits. It has been remarked that books carry the productions of the human mind over the whole world, and may be truly called the raw material of every kind of science and art, and of all social improvement. But the legislature appears to have determined to give every possible discouragement to the issue of books and periodicals—particularly those of a popular or educational character, upon which these impositions fell with far greater force than upon the costly publications circulating among the wealthy. For instance, it is stated by Mr. Petter, in a pamphlet entitled "Some Objections to the Repeal of the Paper Duty Considered," that "Cassell's Elements of Euclid," chiefly used as a school-book, contributed to the tax 12½ per cent. of the price of each copy. The duty upon a raw material, it must be remembered, by no means represents the amount of charge which it entails on the manufacturer. Mr. Charles Knight says: "From 1833 to 1837, the price of a ream of *Penny Cyclopædia* paper was 33s.; from 1838 to 1846, it was 24s. The difference in price was 9s.

* From an Address delivered by Mr. John Francis, Treasurer of the late Press Association for obtaining the Repeal of the Paper Duty.

per ream; the amount of reduced duty was 4s. 4½d. The paper-maker and the stationers doubled the tax." The same writer adds, "Upon a tolerably accurate calculation, I have, from my own unaided resources, expended, during the last twenty years, £80,000 upon copyright and editorial labour. During the same period I have paid £50,000 paper duty, which sum has become a double charge to me by the inevitable operation of a tax upon the raw material."

The explanation of the doubled duty was that the manufacturer must not only be reimbursed the amount he has paid, but both he and the stationer must have a profit on the increased price of the article, to which had to be added a compensation for the hindrance to business, and the trouble and annoyance of excise regulations. Every step of the manufacture and sale of paper was conducted under the surveillance of the revenue officer. Any attempt to improve processes, or to apply paper to any new purpose, was naturally regarded with suspicion, and generally nipped in the bud by the annoyance to which any inventive genius who was unfortunate enough to turn his attention to paper was sure to be subjected. Indeed, it might have been supposed by any one who was ignorant of the origin of the tax, that the making of paper was a criminal act, which the Government, unable to repress entirely, had determined to check and regulate to the utmost of their power. The numerous provisions of the law as to entering, folding, weighing, sorting, labelling, and removing were more than any man could retain in his memory, while compliance was enforced under numerous penalties. The paper-mill owner was bound to give twenty-four or forty-eight hours' notice (according to the distance at which the exciseman lived) before he could change any paper, and to keep it in the mill for twenty-four hours afterwards before he could send it to market, unless it had been re-weighed by the supervisor. He was compelled to have the different rooms in his manufactory, and every engine, vat, press, and chest numbered. Labels had to be pasted on every ream, and if one label happened to be lost, the paper-maker was liable to a penalty of £200. One paper-maker informed Mr. Poulett Thompson that he generally wrote a request for 500 labels to the excise at one time; and that "if any person had got into the mill to steal or destroy them, the penalty would be £100,000." In addition to this he was until very lately compelled to admit the exciseman at all hours of the day or night, or pay £200; he had to keep sufficient scales and weights, and allow the officers to use them, or forfeit £100; and if he employed for his own purposes the more accurate weighing-machine used in other Government departments, the excise, ever jealous of innovation, compelled him to retain the old beam scale for the use of the exciseman. He had to help the exciseman to do his work, or on refusal forfeit £50; he had to enter daily in a book an account of the paper sent out of his mill, the penalty for any forgetfulness on this point being £50; he had to abstain from sending out any paper not tied up in wrappers properly labelled, or forfeit £20. If he had two mills, he could not

move a ream of paper from one to the other without notice, under a penalty of £50; and he was compelled to abstain from opening a stationer's shop within a mile of his manufactory under a penalty of £200. The paper duty was originally imposed in the reign of Queen Anne, for the avowed purpose of putting down newspapers and pamphlets. Dean Swift, in commenting upon the new taxes on knowledge, said, "As the person who advised the Queen had only in his thoughts the redressing of the political and factious libels, I think he ought to have taken care, by his great credit in the House, to have prepared some way by which that evil might be removed; the law for taxing single papers having produced quite a contrary effect, as was then foreseen by many persons, and has since been found true by experience;" and he complained that "those who would draw their pens by the side of their princes and country, are discouraged by this tax, which exceeds the intrinsic value both of the materials and the work; and this, if I be not mistaken, without example."

That the paper duty was not imposed for the sake of revenue is evidenced by the fact that in the first year it produced less than £14,000; but so effectual was it found in putting a stop to the objectionable manufacture, that in the following year the amount collected fell to less than half that sum. The duty was in 1717 made perpetual, and from time to time was increased, until it settled at 3d. per pound on all but common brown paper. In 1835 a Royal Commission, of which Sir Henry Parnell was the chairman, recommended that the duty be reduced to 1½d. on all paper—a change which was carried out in the following year. Some idea of the repressive effect of the old duty may be obtained from comparing the rate of progress of the manufacture for twenty-one years before and twenty-one years after this reduction of duty, as shown by the following figures:—

	England and Wales.		Scotland.		Ireland.		Total.
	lbs.		lbs.		lbs.		lbs.
1814 ...	39,229,892	...	3,753,680	...	1,352,073	...	44,335,644
1835 ...	64,979,846	...	12,015,023	...	2,702,240	...	79,697,114
1856 ...	143,383,281	...	40,998,354	...	7,910,764	...	192,297,399

The stimulus given to cheap publications by this step towards the complete freedom of the paper trade was enormous, although the tax still pressed with crushing effect upon all classes of publications except those luxurious and ornamental or valuable copyright works in which paper bears but a small proportion to the entire cost. From a statement drawn up by one of the largest publishing houses in London, it appeared that, as a rule, where an edition of a book was an average one of 750 copies, the duties amounted to about a seventh of the cost of the edition; and that if the edition consisted of 500 or 750 copies, the duties amounted to more than the entire remuneration of the author. This, however, was on the supposition that the entire number of copies printed were sold off at full publication price—a thing which rarely happened; for, of course, the sale of books under these heavy burdens was greatly restricted. As a rule, half the original impression of a work was rarely sold off except at a ruinous sacrifice. But if, in the previous example

of an edition of 750 copies, it happened that only 625, instead of 750, were sold, the result would be that only £57 19s. would remain as profit to the author and publisher, and as a compensation for interest, the risk of bad debts, &c. Were only 500 copies sold, the cost would not be more than balanced; and there would be nothing whatever to remunerate the author for his labour, or the bookseller for the use of his capital. Were only 400 copies sold, Government would have received £28 19s. 11d. of duty from a speculation by which the author had lost all his labour, and the bookseller £36 15s. of his capital. The mere possibility of such a supposition being realised, would have been a sufficient ground for a revision of the duties; but, in point of fact, such cases, instead of being merely possible or rare, were of every-day occurrence.

On an investigation into the affairs of an extensive publishing concern, it was found that, of 130 works published by it in a given time, 50 had not paid their expenses. Of the 80 that did pay, 13 only had arrived at a second edition; but, in most instances, these second editions had not been profitable. In general it was estimated, that of the books published, a fourth did not pay their expenses; and that only 1 in 8 or 10 could be reprinted with advantage. As respects pamphlets, it was stated that not 1 in 50 paid the expenses of publication.*

"Such," says the same authority (writing in 1834), "is the encouragement given to literature, such the facilities afforded to the diffusion of useful information, by the popular Government of England. All other businesses meet with very different treatment. Dealers in gin or brandy, for example, may lodge their goods in bonded warehouses, and are not obliged to pay any duty upon them until they are sold for home consumption; but such privilege is denied to the bookseller, though the article in which he deals be a thousand times more capricious. He must pay the duty on the whole impression of every book, before bringing a single copy of it to market; so that he not unfrequently pays duty upon 1,000 volumes, though unable to sell above 150 or 200, except as waste paper! Even this is not the whole injury done him; for upon an advertisement announcing the sale of a 6d. pamphlet, as heavy a duty is charged as if it announced the sale of an estate worth £100,000!"

Even such a trifling article as starch was subjected, up to 1835, to a duty which produced upwards of £100,000 per annum. The starch was charged with a duty of 3½d. per lb., and its manufacture was consequently placed under the control of the excise. Every maker of starch for sale had to take out an annual licence, which cost £5. Notice was to be given to the excise of the erection, and of all changes in the construction, of workshops, implements, &c., used in the manufacture of starch, under a penalty of £200. All starch, before it was put into any stove or place to dry, was to be papered and sealed or stamped by the officer, under a penalty of

£100. Any person forging or counterfeiting such stamp or seal was guilty of felony, but with the benefit of clergy. Any person knowingly selling any starch with a forged or counterfeit stamp, &c., forfeited £500. No quantity of starch exceeding 28 lbs. could be removed from one place to another, unless the word "starch" were marked on the package, in legible letters three inches long, under forfeiture of the package, and of the cattle and carts conveying the same. Any dealer in starch receiving any quantity exceeding 28 lbs. not marked as above, forfeited £200. Starch-makers were to make weekly entries of the starch made by them, under a penalty of £50, and to make payment of the duties within a week of such entry. Permits granted for shipping starch to be carried coastwise were to express the quality, quantity, weight, the mark of the package, by whom made and sold, and to whom consigned; and if shipped without such docket, it might be seized. No starch was to be imported unless in packages containing at least 224 lbs. stowed openly in the hold, on pain of forfeiture and a penalty of £50. No starch was to be exported unless the package as originally sealed or stamped by the officer was entire, and unless the officer marked the word "exportation" upon it.

All this absurd interference with industry was swept away in 1834, and in the same year a considerable reduction was made in the duty on that necessary article, soap. In the same year of reform, a ridiculous duty on stone bottles was swept away—a duty which, for the sake of about £4,000 per annum, subjected the manufacturers of earthenware to annoyances no less harassing than those which we have sketched above. Among the odd effects of the repeal of this silly duty, we may notice the rapid extension of the consumption of that popular beverage, ginger-beer, which is invariably kept in stone bottles, and which, before the removal of the duty, was scarcely known. Sweets and mead were also emancipated in 1835; but from that period until Sir Robert Peel's great changes, in 1845-6, the beneficial course of remission of excise duties was unhappily suspended. The results of these changes have been in the highest degree satisfactory. They have shown that the multiplication of vexatious restraints upon industrial liberty was not only an evil, but a folly. The removal of each duty has been followed in every case by an enormous progress in the manufacture. New uses have been discovered for every article, improvements made in the article itself and in the processes of manufacture, and fresh employment has been found for the people. The consumption of every kind of commodity, taxed and untaxed, has thus been increased, and, as a consequence, it has been found that all this relief to industry and to the consumer of the articles has absolutely cost the revenue nothing. This will be best shown by looking forward a little beyond the period which we are now describing. In 1830 we had 27 different excise duties, which produced £20,076,862; in 1831, 24, which produced £17,795,512; in 1833, 23, which produced £17,510,073; in 1834, 21, which produced £17,573,209; in 1835, 18, which produced

* McCulloch's "Dictionary of Commerce," Edit. 1834, Art. "Books."

£17,861,624; in 1846, 16, which produced £18,183,454; in 1853, 15, which produced £19,105,404; in 1854, 12, which produced £19,739,185; while in 1858, these 12 duties actually produced £339,440 more than the whole 27 had produced in 1830.

The tariff reforms during this period were less important. Indeed, the systematic and extensive revision of the customs duties was, to a very considerable extent (as remarked by Mr. Tooke), in the position in which it had been left by Mr. Huskisson in 1826. The budget of 1831 had, however, relinquished £979,000 on coals brought coastwise, a manifestly unfair species of domestic protection to the inland coal mines, and a great injustice to those parts of the kingdom to which coals had to be brought by sea. The timber duties had long been, in the eyes of Free-traders, among the most unwise and injurious of all the protective duties in the tariff. Baltic timber, of which we now obtain such enormous supplies, was loaded with a duty so high that it was virtually prohibitory, while timber from Canada was imported at a trifling rate. The evil effects of this tax were almost incalculable. The practice of encouraging Canadian timber was one of the mischievous consequences of the great war with France, during which the Baltic was for a short time closed. So beneficial, however, was it found to the class interests at home, that in 1813, after Napoleon's Russian campaign, and when the Baltic was once more open, 25 per cent. was added to the duties. "The absurdity of this conduct," says a writer in 1834, "will appear still more striking, if we reflect for a moment on the peculiar situation of the countries in the north of Europe. The nations round the Baltic have made little progress in manufacturing industry. They possess an abundance of valuable raw products, but they are wholly destitute of the finer species of manufactured commodities, nor have they any real inducement to take measures for obtaining a supply of them. Their iron and copper mines, their vast forests, and their immense tracts of fertile and hitherto unoccupied land, afford far more ready and advantageous investments for their deficient capital than could be found in manufactures or foreign trade. Russia and Prussia have, indeed, been tempted, by our corn and timber laws, to exclude some species of manufactured goods; but it is not possible for them materially to limit our exports to them, unless we second their efforts by refusing to admit their products. Of all the countries in the world, there is obviously none which has so many facilities for carrying on an advantageous trade with the North as Great Britain. We have a surplus of all those products of which Russia, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway stand most in need; and, on the other hand, they have a surplus of many things of which we are comparatively destitute. The immense traffic we carry on with the Baltic does not, therefore, depend in any considerable degree on artificial or accidental circumstances."

Of course, the effect was partially to destroy not only our timber trade, but the manufacture of those products which we sent in exchange. In 1809, when this system

began, 428,000 tons of British shipping were engaged in the Baltic trade; in 1815, though the Baltic was then perfectly open to British commerce, we had only 242,000 tons of shipping engaged in that trade; while in 1816 the amount had fallen to 181,000. In fact, the countries of the Baltic being no longer able to purchase our goods with timber—almost the only article they had to sell—transferred their trade to Prussia and other countries. Our exports to Sweden, which in 1814 amounted to £511,818, had declined in 1819 to £46,656; and the exports to Norway, which had in 1815 amounted to £199,902, amounted in 1819 to £64,741 only.* Meanwhile the cost of house-building, to which timber is so necessary, was greatly increased; while, to add to the folly of these differential taxes, our ships could only be built at far greater cost than those of other countries, who were gradually securing to themselves that ship-building trade which is generally regarded as peculiarly the birthright of British industry. In short, British landlords alone profited by this impolitic tax, the wastefulness of which was infinitely greater than the gains of any particular class. All that the Government of Lord Althorp, however, proposed was a reform which would still have left the duty on European timber at 50s. the load, while that on Canadian timber was to be rated at the enormously disproportionate sum of 10s. In vain did Mr. Spring Rice and Mr. Poulett Thompson, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, show that the Canada timber trade had been a losing one for the country, and that great quantities of timber shipped in Canada for this country were not the produce of Canada at all; in fact, a great trade had sprung up in the shipment of Baltic timber for Canada, where, having acquired the character and privileges of Canadian timber, it was re-shipped and sent to England at the lower duty. Of course, all the expense of this roundabout proceeding fell ultimately upon the English people, and was sheer waste. Added to this, the Canadian timber was far inferior to that imported from the Baltic. The Admiralty had declared it to be unfit for the use of the navy, and it was entirely excluded from all timber contracts. Nevertheless, the House of Commons would listen to no arguments of this kind. Great part of the property of the landed gentry consisted of the timber on their estates, which must fall considerably in value if the country could have obtained abundant supplies so near home as Norway and Sweden. The landowners throughout the country were, therefore, loud in denouncing the alleged injustice to our own colony, for whose benefit they asserted that this unjust and profligate system ought to be continued; and the Government plan was finally abandoned.

In 1832 some trifling reductions were made in the duties on hemp and other raw materials. In 1833 the mischievous duty imposed two years before upon cotton wool—a duty which, of course, tended greatly to diminish employment for the Lancashire mill-hands—was reduced; and in 1834 some reductions were made

* Lord's Report on Foreign Trade of the Country, 1820.

in the duty on oil and grocers' articles, which formed important items in our import trade. But the great injustice of the corn laws still remained untouched, and to all appearance appeared little likely to be modified in favour of the poor. The sliding scale which had been established in 1828 still raised its cumbrous but too effectual barriers against the food supplies which were ever ready at our doors to relieve the distress of the people. Under the Act of that year, foreign corn could be admitted as soon as our own corn had reached £2 10s. a quarter, but then only on paying a duty of £1 16s. 8d.; after which, by four violent jumps, which seemed to have been devised for the express purpose of rendering the corn trade more hazardous than any other kind of business, the duty settled at 1s. when the price of our own corn had reached £3 13s. Nature herself, it must be remembered, had done something for the protection of the British landlord in the difficulties of bringing supplies from the plains of Poland, and the far distant fields of Canada and the United States. The cost of this long transport, of course, added greatly to the low prices at which the corn could be obtained in those abundant grain countries; but to this the importer must add these enormous duties before he could be reimbursed his outlay. How little shelter from the famine of bad seasons the people could expect from this law may therefore be easily perceived. And yet there were years when they paid these exorbitant dues—when some foreign corn was imported, and a trifling relief secured, even upon the harsh terms which the landowners had imposed upon them. It was at such times only that the faint cry for free trade in corn could obtain a hearing; for in years of plenty the troubles of the farmer were invariably brought forward as a plea for more complete prohibition.

Among the earliest of the parliamentary champions of the people's right to cheap food was the Hon. Mr. Villiers, the present President of the Poor Law Board. Mr. Villiers had been educated in a sphere in which popular rights were little likely to find an advocate. He was a younger son of the Hon. George Villiers, nephew of the Earl of Clarendon and the Earl of Morley. Originally destined for India, he studied at the East India College under Mr. Malthus and Sir James Mackintosh, the former being the celebrated professor of political economy, and the author of the well-known work on population. It is remarkable that Mr. Malthus differed from most economists in his views of the subject which afterwards engaged his pupil's attention, and was an advocate of the principle of protection to agriculture. But Mr. Villiers soon found himself in a better school for acquiring just views on the operation of the corn laws. He became a pupil of Mr. McCulloch, the author of the "Commercial Dictionary," and till lately one of the soundest and most consistent advocates of commercial and fiscal reforms. The bold attacks of Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Canning upon commercial monopolies naturally excited his admiration, and as a supporter of those statesmen he offered himself as a candidate for Hull at the general election in 1826.

The election was lost by a small majority, and Mr. Villiers was afterwards called to the bar, became Secretary to the Master of the Rolls, and subsequently one of the Examiners in Chancery. At the general election in 1835, he presented himself as a candidate for Wolverhampton, avowing the same free trade principles which he had professed nine years before at Hull. It is said to have been at a meeting at Sir William Molesworth's, in 1837, that Mr. Villiers was strongly urged to take the opposition to the corn laws as his peculiar field of parliamentary duty; and in that year he pledged himself at the hustings to move for their total repeal, an object at that time generally regarded as too wild and hopeless to be undertaken seriously by a practical statesman. In some degree, however, the time was well chosen. The condition of the people had been growing worse for some years previously; the price of corn had shown a tendency to rise for several seasons; and a severe frost, lasting with little interruption from the beginning of January till near the end of February, and followed by cold, ungenial weather, still further increased the people's sufferings. For the first time for many years, the Thames was completely blocked by the floating ice. On the 21st of January several persons passed over the ice in safety, and during the whole of the day there was a regular communication between the vessels lying in the middle of the river off the Tower and the shore, over the ice. Navigation had become impossible, and business at the whole of the wharfs along both shores was brought to a standstill. From the London Dock pier immense fields of ice were visible as far below as the eye could see, and imbedded in them were barges, boats, and steam-vessels. At Blackwall there was a complete block. Steamers ceased to go out of the river on the 20th, and even at Gravesend business was suspended. Scenes took place which reminded the old people of the terrible times of 1814, when the frost fair was held on the Thames, and the British farmer's heart was rejoiced with corn at famine prices. At Hammer-smith a sheep was roasted whole on the ice near the centre of the river by the Suspension Bridge; and skittle grounds were formed on the ice opposite the eastern corner of the Custom House, where the game was played by great numbers all day; while fires were made on the frozen river, and booths erected for the sale of beer and other refreshments. Such a time, however picturesque in these aspects, is always one of cruel suffering for those who have only the labour of their hands wherewith to support themselves and those dependent on them. That large class who are employed in the shipping trade and in the warehouses of our great commercial ports were, of course, thrown out of employment by these causes; and the numerous classes dependent directly or indirectly upon them were in scarcely any better condition. The price of coals in February rose to 2s. a bushel. This year, too, the rigours of the new poor law began to be bitterly complained of, and were not the less real because that measure was in the end destined to contribute largely to the moral and social well-being of the people. It was



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asked by benevolent men whether this act should be continued until the poor were roused to rebellion? It was stated in Parliament that the deaths in Ampthill and other workhouses had been frightful; that wages had not risen, as the advocates of the poor law had expected, but, on the contrary, had been everywhere in the country reduced, while the parish "head-money," as it was called, had been taken away; that hundreds of labourers were out of work; that the poor were suffering distress to an extent never before known among them. Mr. Fielden, the member of Parliament, himself an overseer of the poor, declared "that they could not obtain a sufficiency of food of any sort; that their furniture was going, that their bedding was going, and that they were reduced to the last resource of selling their clothing to buy bread."* In Nottingham such great and severe distress prevailed, that it had been found impossible to maintain the new poor law system; the commissioners declaring that the union being full, it was not the principle of the new act to refuse out-door relief; but in Holbeach, where the distress was no less urgent, the commissioners declared that they dared not admit this doctrine, as the farmers and others who were employing the labourers at no immediate profit would at once throw them on the rates. A meeting of women took place at Elland, in Yorkshire, in which the new law was denounced in the most violent language—the separation of husband and wife, and of mother from child, by this law, being particularly dwelt upon. In addition to these signs of the times, the Chartist, of whose movements we have already given an account, now, for the first time, began to attract notice. A very uneasy spirit had taken possession of the working classes in the manufacturing districts. The people had, unfortunately, but a confused sense of the causes of their troubles. They described their agitation, indeed, as "a knife and fork question," and declared that they meant by universal suffrage "that every working man in the land had a right to have a good coat and hat, a good roof over his head, and a good dinner upon his table." But few spoke of those mischievous burdens upon trade and industry which, while they deprived the workman of employment, increased his misery, by rendering his food, his clothing, and the very materials for building a home to shelter him, dear through artificial scarcity. Indeed, the Chartist leaders openly declared themselves enemies of free trade. They regarded the free trade movement as a middle class affair; they absurdly imagined that cheap food would lead only to the lowering of their wages; and the Protectionist speakers in Parliament took care to favour these ideas. Meanwhile, the more intelligent reformers and advocates of free trade were exasperated by reading in the papers of the low price of food in countries within a few hours' sail of our shores, from which, however, our merchants were forbidden to import it for the relief of the people. The *Times*, February 19, 1838, contains the following paragraph:—

"The price of white wheaten bread of the finest

quality in Paris is 65 centimes the two kilogrammes, which is less than 5½d. the loaf of 4 lbs. English weight; and the price of bread of the first quality in London being 9d. the loaf of 4 lbs., the difference shows that bread is 56½ per cent. dearer in London than in Paris. The highest quotation of flour of the first quality answers to 35s. 10d. the sack of 280 lbs. English weight, and the quotation of flour of the first quality in London being 55s., it follows that flour is 53 per cent. dearer in London than at Paris, and that with the sum of £2 15s. a man may buy 430 lbs. of fine flour at Paris; whereas, with the same sum he can buy only 280 lbs. in London." Such was the case in a country within sight of Dover cliffs; but in neighbouring countries the contrast was still greater. The same journal for the 27th of February publishes the following "Comparison of Foreign Grain:"—"The highest quotation of white wheat of the first quality at Hamburg answers to 31s. 5d. the quarter, and the highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality answers to 30s. 1d. the quarter, and therefore the mean price at Hamburg of white and red wheat together is 30s. 9d. the quarter. The highest quotation of white wheat of the first quality in London is 64s. the quarter, and the highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality is 60s. the quarter, and therefore the mean price in London of white and red wheat together is 62s. the quarter. It appears, therefore, that wheat is 101½ per cent. dearer in London than at Hamburg, and that with the sum of £3 2s. a man may buy 16½ bushels of wheat at Hamburg; whereas, with the same sum he can buy only 8 bushels in London.

"The highest quotation of Zealand white wheat of the first quality at Amsterdam is equal to 37s. 11d. the quarter, and the mean price of wheat of the first quality in London being 62s. the quarter, it follows that wheat is 63½ per cent. dearer in London than at Amsterdam. The highest quotation of white wheat of the first quality at Berlin answers to 32s. 2d. the quarter, and the highest quotation of white wheat of the first quality in London being 64s. the quarter, the difference is that wheat is 99 per cent. dearer in London than at Berlin. The highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality at Stettin is equivalent to 26s. 7d. the quarter, and the highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality in London being 60s. the quarter, it follows that wheat is 125½ per cent. dearer in London than at Stettin, and that with the sum of £3 a man may buy 18 bushels of wheat at Stettin, whereas with the same sum he can buy only 8 bushels in London. The mean or average of the prices of wheat of the first quality at Hamburg, Amsterdam, Berlin, and Stettin, is 31s. 10d. the quarter, and the mean price of wheat of the first quality in London being 62s. the quarter, the difference is 94½ per cent. that the mean price of London exceeds that of the four above-mentioned places. The present duty on the importation of foreign wheat into England is 32s. 8d. the quarter, which is equal to the following rates:—To a rate of £106 4s. 8d. per cent. on the prime cost of wheat at Hamburg; to a rate of £86 3s. 1d. per cent. on the prime cost at Amsterdam; to a rate of £101 10s. 10d.

* Debate on Repeal of the New Poor Laws, Feb. 20, 1838.

per cent. on the prime cost of wheat at Berlin; to a rate of £122 17s. 8d. per cent. on the prime cost of wheat at Stettin; and to a rate of £102 12s. 5d. per cent. on the mean price of the four above-mentioned places."

The Parliamentary Report on the Inquiry into the Condition of the Hand-loom Weavers, undertaken in this year, describes the impression that corn laws were, directly and indirectly, injurious to trade and the condition of the working classes as universally prevalent among masters and men. "The operation of the corn laws," says one of the commissioners, "in impeding the sale of British manufactured goods in countries willing to receive them, will be best explained by the following statement, communicated to me by letter from Mr. William Barret, a manufacturer at Newton Heath, Manchester:—"In the autumn of 1819, a time when there was much distress and discontent among the hand-loom weavers, Mr. John Bell, an agent from a respectable house in Hamburg, offered us an order for several kinds of goods which we were manufacturing. We accepted the order, of course; and I said, "How do you pay?" He replied, "We pay in corn." "In corn!" I said. "But the ports are shut; we cannot enter a single bushel for home consumption." He answered, "We are aware of that; but it can be bonded; and you can ship it to the Peninsula." I said, "We have no connection there, and it will not do for us to become foreign merchants; but, if you cannot pay in money, can you send us nothing else? Can you send us linen yarn, which we could use?" "No," he replied; "our warehouses are blocked up full of corn, and we have nothing else to offer, though we are much in want of goods." I then said, "We are very sorry to refuse such an order at this time, for our weavers are not fully employed; but refuse it we must, for we can do nothing with corn: however, as we have gone so far, would you please to tell us at what price you would charge it?" He then produced his memorandum of goods wanted, and written instructions, and showed us that he was authorised to offer the best Baltic wheat, free at Hull, for 30s. 6d. per quarter. The average price in the English market at this time was 64s. I had," says the writer, "some doubts before this whether it would be proper to allow a free trade in corn; but the matter was here brought home: for we not only missed a good order, but were prevented from finding our weavers with work, and supplying them with good bread-corn at about one-half the price." The statements of the manufacturers that by maintaining the corn laws we were encouraging the growth of foreign manufactures, to an extent which threatens our own with extinction, have been brought so fully before Government by themselves, that I need not repeat here the evidence many of them submitted to me to the same effect."

In another portion of the Report we find the following statement as to the condition of the working class at this time:—"Wheaten bread and flour, as daily food, are still beyond the reach of fully one-third of the population of Great Britain and Ireland. But taking the

whole body of agricultural labourers, supposed to derive the greatest practical benefit from our corn laws, beef and mutton, as articles of food among them, are almost unknown from the north of England to the south. Pork is the only description of animal food they get, and often little of that; so generally are they under-fed, that it is often very difficult to rally a constitution after an attack of fever or ague in the rural districts. I have often heard medical men say, 'We give them tonic medicines, but the only physic they want is a slice of mutton or beef every day for three months; and that we cannot prescribe, for how are they to purchase meat without denying themselves bread? When 8s. out of 15s. must be spent in bread and flour by a family, and the greater part of the rest be expended in rent, clothing, and fuel, what is there left for animal food?' The report continues as follows:—

"In the 'Annals of Agriculture' (vol. xxxvii., p. 265), Arthur Young says:—"There is now living (1801), in the vicinity of Bury, a person who, when he laboured for 5s., could purchase with that 5s. a bushel of wheat, a bushel of malt, 1 lb. of butter, 1 lb. of cheese, and a pennyworth of tobacco. To enable the same man to purchase the same articles at the present moment, his wages ought to have risen from 5s. to 22s. The present prices are—for a bushel of wheat, 11s.; a bushel of malt, 9s.; 1 lb. of butter, 1s. 2d.; 1 lb. of cheese, 9d.; a pennyworth of tobacco, 1d.; total, £1 2s. The present average of wages for an agricultural labourer may, perhaps, be assumed at 10s.; no other class of persons, therefore, has suffered so severely by the tendency of the existing system to make bread dear as agricultural labourers, and I do not except hand-loom weavers." To such a pass was the English labourer brought in 1838-9!

On the 15th of March, 1838, Mr. Villiers rose in Parliament to make the first of those motions on the corn laws with which he afterwards became associated in the public mind. After modestly alluding to his own position in the House, he told his hearers that of all the errors and injustice which an unreformed Parliament had inflicted on the country, these unrighteous laws, which raised the price while they limited the amount of human subsistence, were the most infamous. He knew that he should be told that it was idle to moot such a matter at the present moment, and that he could have no prospect of success; but the people had a right to seek justice from the House. He warned them that the time would arrive when the removal of those laws must be taken into consideration by the legislature, and when neither that nor the other House of Parliament could withhold from the people, by means either of privilege or power, the justice they demanded. He pointed out the extreme tenderness of the legislature for the interests of the agriculturists, and contrasted it with their indifference to those of all other classes of producers. He showed that although the effects of machinery and other labour-saving processes had been to benefit the nation by

increasing production, they had frequently been attended by ruin and distress to those whose labour was superseded by them; yet no one had thought of giving these unfortunate people compensation for the injury done them—much less of protecting them by artificial laws against the cheapness and abundance which had deprived them of employment. When the labourers complained of machinery, or arose in a body to destroy their new enemy, they were reminded of the truths of political economy, and told that they ought to be contented, because on the whole the results were beneficial to the country. The legislature had even given rewards and encouragement to inventors of machinery for economising labour. Mr. Villiers referred to the case of the hand-loom weavers, who had remained in great distress since the introduction of Dr. Cartwright's invention; and asked the House whether a majority of the hand-loom weavers in that and the other House of Parliament might not prohibit the power-looms or parody the sliding scale of the corn laws by enacting that, until the cloth produced by hand labour had reached a certain price, that produced by the new machinery should be subjected to a fluctuating rate of duty. If this should be regarded by the House as mere political economy and abstract notions, more fitted for Frenchmen than enlightened Britons, he asked them what the coal owners might be expected to say if a plan were invented for warming the chambers of honourable gentlemen without the use of coal. Might they not call out for protection like the landowners, and would they not be able to support their claims by arguments equally strong? He declared that if the House would resolve itself into a committee, he would certainly move for the repeal of the whole of the duties on corn. He exposed the futility of the plea that these duties were necessary for the revenue, because the landlords could not pay taxes unless their incomes were sustained by these artificial regulations. The manufacturer, he said, had only a protection of 20, or at most of 30 per cent., whilst the landowner had a protection of 80, if not 100 per cent.; but the manufacturers of Great Britain did not wish for protection, and repudiated the principle of imposing duties in order to give their productions an undue preference over those of other countries. Taking the quantity of wheat sold annually at twenty-six millions of quarters, he calculated that the agriculturists, if the corn laws were repealed, would lose £15,600,000. It was plain, then, that this represented the sum taken annually from the pockets of the industrious classes to enrich the landed interest. Several witnesses from Sheffield had stated before a recent committee of the House that manufacturers to a great extent had left that town and established themselves successfully in the Rhenish provinces of Prussia, because bread was there only 1½d., and beef 3½d. a pound; while the corn monopolists in this country maintained the price of the former of those articles at 3d. and 4d., and the latter at 7d. and 8d. Twenty-four years had now passed under the present system, and what advantage had the country received? Even the landowners could not come forward and represent themselves as a happy, prosperous, or contented

race. It was impossible to open one of the petitions and reports which filled the shelves of the library of the House without finding conclusive evidence of the pernicious effects of these laws. The report of the committee which sat in 1821, only five years after the corn law was passed, spoke of the great distress of the agricultural body which that law was intended to prevent, and all but expressed that it was this very law which caused the distress. The well-being of the farmer depended upon nothing so much as upon steadiness of prices; but no more effectual means could be devised for bringing about unsteadiness of prices than the corn laws. They promised the farmer high prices, but they gave him no security for them. They did not guard him against the effects of differences of the seasons, against differences of the soil as between this country and Ireland, against improvements in agriculture, and therefore they did not take any effectual means to secure the prices at a fixed level. This was the cause of all the distress which had prevailed. The farmer was induced by the laws to speculate upon the certainty of getting nearly twice as much as the actual price, and so ran in debt to his landlord, and was ultimately ruined. Mr. Villiers then exposed the pretence that the welfare of the agricultural labourer was included in the objects of the supporters of these laws. He asked the House to remember the condition of the agricultural labourer in 1830, when nine out of ten were paupers. Was he not told then that his labour was not wanted, and was he not charged in most parishes with some offence against the law in breaking machinery? And did honourable gentlemen care for the labourer in other matters? Would not the agricultural labourers rather desire to put a stop to machinery than cry out for the corn laws? Mr. Villiers then concluded his speech by stating that "every friend of the country should raise his voice for the establishment of commercial freedom, which was as essential to our prosperity as the civil and religious liberty for which we struggled in former times. We fought for and won the latter; and it was now the duty of public men to use their best efforts for the emancipation of our commercial interests. They should look to the welfare of the industrious classes of the community, and enable them to fulfil the designs of Nature, and, by the exchange of their toil with their fellow-men, to obtain an adequate reward for their industry. He would now move that this House resolve itself into a committee of the whole House to consider the act of the 9th of George IV. c. 60, relating to the importation of corn. He had put his motion in this form to avoid offending the prejudices of any person. He did not expect that members would pledge themselves to repeal the corn laws, but he hoped that they would admit that the law as it stood at present was defective, and would vote for a committee."

The motion was seconded by that Sir William Molesworth who afterwards became so widely known for his enlightened and successful efforts to reform our colonial policy, which won for him the title of the Liberator and Regenerator of the Colonial Empire of Great Britain. Placed, at a very early period of life, in the possession

of great wealth, Sir William Molesworth voluntarily chose to devote his time to severe, abstruse thought and study. He was the intimate friend of Bentham and James Mill (the political economist and historian of British rule in India). It has been remarked that Nature had endowed him with a mind wanting in that flexibility and dexterity which constitute the Parliamentary gladiator, and possessing neither quickness of apprehension nor brilliancy of imagination, but remarkably clear, sound, logical, and comprehensive. No man was more luminous in arrangement, more clear and conclusive in argument—no man combined and tempered more happily abstract theory with practical good sense—no man looked less to the victory of the moment, or more to the establishment of the truth and the progress of human enlightenment. The elaborate care with which he was known to prepare his speeches combined with certain natural defects of manner and elocution to prevent his becoming a popular orator; but the weapons that he wielded were weighty, and probably no one ever produced so much effect in so few speeches. The moral nature of the man was a fitting counterpart to the intellectual. Simple, sincere, and straightforward, without fear and without compromise, no man's assertions carried more weight, no man received and deserved more entire credit for consistency of principle and singleness of purpose. Sir William entered into public life at a very early age. At the first election after the passing of the Reform Bill, he was elected without opposition for the eastern division of Cornwall, his native county, and he soon became distinguished as one of the party popularly known as "philosophical Radicals," of which Bentham was the chief. In 1837 he had been returned for Leeds, for which borough he now sat in Parliament.

It was natural that Sir William Molesworth should take a somewhat more abstract view of the question than his friend the mover of the resolution. Country gentlemen who held their seats secure by virtue of territorial influence drew their hats over their eyes and nodded while the Radical young baronet explained to them how, in his opinion, the tendency of the corn laws was to create discontent, uneasiness, and an infinitude of moral evils among the great bulk of the community. "A nation," he said, "was rich or poor, powerful or weak, according to the facility or difficulty with which it obtained food for its population—according as a greater or less proportion of hands is employed in raising subsistence for the whole society." He pictured a state of society in which the landlord's theory should be carried to the highest pitch, and so much employment secured for the agricultural interest by artificial limitations of the supply, that nearly the whole population should be absorbed in producing food. In such a state of society, he remarked, no individual could possess any amount of leisure—there could be no disposable portion of the population, fed by the remainder, to be employed either for the purposes of defence or aggression; there could be no combination of labour, nor arts, nor manufactures of any importance, nor commerce,

nor science. Far different was the condition of the population in which only a small portion needed to be employed in procuring food, and where consequently a large surplus was raised. That surplus was the fund out of which the community paid those who devoted themselves to the different sciences or learned professions. To that surplus we owed our armies and navies, and the means of defraying the interest of our debt. To that surplus we were indebted for our crowded cities, our temples of piety, our schools and colleges of education, our halls of legislation and justice. These positions seemed to him clearly to point out the injurious effects of the law which restricted the importation of corn. A labourer in England could not obtain anything like as much food by tilling the soil as he could obtain in exchange for the products of his manufacturing industry. Thus, the immediate effect of the corn laws was to augment the proportion of labourers employed in growing subsistence, and to increase to the same extent the disposable population. The community was, therefore, less rich, powerful, and civilised than it might be with an unrestricted trade in corn.

This manner of putting the case, in which the student of political economy will recognise the influence of Mr. Malthus and Dr. Chalmers, was not very likely to find favour in the ears of gentlemen nursed in all the conventional notions of the primary importance of agriculture in a state—who garnished their speeches with allusions to Cincinnatus and the plough, to Horace and his Sabine farm, and interspersed them with quotations from the "Georgics." With the more honest of the territorial party, some representatives of whom may still be seen in blue coats and gilt buttons, and with prim buff waistcoats, sitting upon the benches of the House of Commons, such notions were closely allied with irreligion and moral depravity. The Marquis of Chandos, that peer to whom the landed aristocracy were indebted for the famous Chandos Clause in the Reform Bill, rose to reply. He told the House that he could perceive that nothing but a total repeal of the corn laws would satisfy honourable members opposite. But he would ask, were not the manufacturers protected? Only a few nights since Government were called on to afford protection to the Irish linen trade, and "he could not see why the agriculturist should not receive a similar favour." The speaker forgot that there was a third party to the question—the poor man, who was deprived of cheap food and clothing, and who could hardly be consoled for being starved by the landlords by being told that the legislature had taken care to place clean linen as far out of his reach as an adequate supply of bread and meat. The noble lord contended that if the corn laws were repealed, no farmer could exist, which was probably true enough, unless the landlord would reduce his rents. He then reminded Mr. Villiers that he had overlooked the fact that "about a year and a half previously there had been a great importation of foreign corn," but he did not mention that this was subject to the enormous duty imposed upon it. "He thought it would be a neglect of his duty to his constituents not to claim for

the farmers a continuance of that protection to which they were so justly entitled." Mr. C. Berkeley (a younger son of the Earl of Berkeley), the reformer, and advocate of the Ballot, who had promised to resign his seat for Cheltenham when the majority of his constituents should express their dissatisfaction with him, somewhat relevantly remarked that he did not think it possible to separate the agricultural interest from the trading interest. "He was well aware that at the last election it was attempted to raise a cry that the Liberal candidates were inclined to throw over the agricultural interests for the sake of the manufacturing interests; but this cry was raised for party purposes, as it was impossible for any sensible man to entertain for a moment the notion that these interests were not completely inseparable."

The opinion of Sir Henry Parnell, who followed this speaker, had probably more weight with the House than that of any other party to the debate. Originally an advocate of protection, a supporter of the corn laws in 1813, at which time he had recommended a total prohibition until corn had risen to 80s. a quarter, his opponents professed to hear with astonishment the arguments which he put forth that night, and to hint that his intimacy with Dundee, for which borough he had sat since 1833, had wrought a wonderful change in his opinions on the corn law question. The views which he set forth, however, were simply those which he had advocated nearly ten years before in his work on "Parliamentary Reform," which we have already noticed. Sir Henry had been chairman of the Finance Committee in 1828, where the new views which he had adopted were doubtless materially strengthened. In 1833 he had been appointed a member of the Excise Inquiry Commission, and besides his best known work had published a number of pamphlets on Banking and the Currency. He had held the office of Secretary-at-War, which he quitted because the Ministry would not concur in his estimates. At that time (1838) under Lord Melbourne, he filled the offices of Paymaster-General of the Forces, and Treasurer of the Navy. Sir Henry told the noble lord (the Marquis of Chandos) that the manufacturers of the kingdom were themselves aware of the impolicy of the restrictive system which had so long been enforced, and that a short time since he had himself had the honour of presenting to Her Majesty's Government a memorial from his constituents who, although manufacturers, saw the impolicy of restrictive laws, and particularly as applied to their own peculiar branch of trade. He then exposed with masterly logic the hollowness of the landowner's pretended regard for the interests of his tenants. The noble lord (he continued) asked how the farmer was to exist if he was not protected in the sale of his produce? Now all this was a practical delusion, which kept out of sight the true character and bearing of the question. He begged most distinctly to declare his opinion that there was no one interest in the country which derived any advantage from the corn laws but the landowner's. Under the non-leasing system, which almost universally prevailed,

the farmer could derive but a very small and temporary interest from an increasing price of corn. As long as the rent was proportioned to the average price, as at present, the farmer could not have any interest in the price of corn, and the landowner was the only person who profited by a rise. On the other hand, whilst the farmer gained nothing by the corn laws, he lost much in the increased prices of all the various commodities he had to purchase, and which necessarily kept pace with that of corn. If this point were properly considered, the farmer would see that his true interest consisted in having corn cheap instead of dear. He repeated that out of the vast community of this kingdom, amounting to 24,000,000 souls, there were but a few hundreds of thousands who obtained any advantage from the tax raised by means of these corn laws upon the prices of all articles of consumption.

The next speaker was the Earl of Darlington, the eldest son of the Duke of Cleveland, a lieutenant-colonel in the army, and a Conservative, who had opposed the Reform Bill even while his father, in the House of Lords, supported it. "It had," he said, "never fallen to his lot to be more astonished than he was at the speech of the right honourable baronet. He had paid the greatest attention to the arguments which had been urged on other occasions in favour of a repeal of this measure, and he had heard no new ones introduced in this discussion. Hitherto they had failed to convince any one except a few honourable members in former Parliaments, and he had no doubt such would be the result in the present. He was surprised at the statement that the manufacturers would be glad if the duty were taken off. He had never heard anything of the kind from the glovers, shoemakers, or other country manufacturers of the kingdom.

Mr. Clay, the member for the Tower Hamlets, a retired merchant and ship-owner, and an advanced reformer, called upon honourable gentlemen to point out one single manufactured article which was protected to a like degree with corn. He remarked that, bad as all these restrictions were, the protective duty on corn differed from the protective duty on manufactures, not only in its amount, but in its nature. There was no manufactured article in this country protected by a duty varying, like the duty on corn, in proportion to the price of the article. It was his intention to have proposed the substitution of a fixed duty, but, in compliance with the wishes of several gentlemen near him, he refrained from proposing it. Mr. Gally Knight, the member for North Nottinghamshire, could not deny the distress which existed, but thought it had nothing to do with the high price of corn. The distress at Nottingham he considered to arise from over-production, or improvements in machinery, and the monetary state of America; but Sir Ronald Ferguson, the member for Nottingham, reminded the House that he had recently presented a petition from the corporation of that town praying for total repeal as a means of alleviating the distress which prevailed. Mr. Dunlop, Mr. Roche (the member for Cork county), and Mr. Mark Philips, spoke also in

favour of the motion; but among those who concluded the debate were two members who demand special notice, from the conspicuous part which they played in subsequent discussions. These members were Mr. Cayley and Mr. Disraeli. Mr. Cayley said that twelve years ago there had been a cry raised throughout the country for a repeal of the corn laws, but that that cry had now almost ceased. And what was the reason? The people had become more intelligent, and they were not now carried away by the delusions which were then afloat in regard to cheap bread. If they asked the labouring classes now whether they preferred a high or

Mr. Disraeli—who, whatever may have been his embarrassment on first speaking in the House, had by this time learnt to deliver with remarkable fluency the views of the country party—said that much had been spoken of the advantage which the British manufacturers would derive from the abolition of the corn laws; but he conceived it to be a delusion to suppose that, were a different state of the law to prevail in this country with regard to corn, the Continent would suffer England to be the workshop of the world. The real question for the House to inquire into was, whether or not there existed any good ground to fear competition



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low price of corn, they would answer that they were better off when the price of corn was high, because a reduction in the price of corn was always followed by a corresponding reduction in the rate of wages. The rate of wages was regulated by the price of corn, and in proportion as the price of corn increased, the rate of wages was advanced. If the corn laws were repealed, let the House consider what would be the almost immediate effect. A large quantity of the land of this country would be thrown out of cultivation, and, as a consequence, a large portion of the labourers would be deprived of employment. The rural population would, to a great extent, be deprived of wages, and reduced to the greatest misery.

for English industry at present in consequence of the existence of the corn laws. He had inquired of a friend, who complained of competition in Belgium, in what way the people of that country entered injuriously into competition with the British manufacturing interest; and his reply was, that "they were doing a great deal in small nails;" and so it appeared that all that the British manufacturers had to fear there was a competition "in small nails." He certainly was aware that the demand for British manufactures was declining in the Levant; but if any man were to inquire of the mercantile houses in Constantinople and Smyrna the cause of that decline, he would learn that it was in no degree owing to the influence of the corn laws. The English

manufacturers, unfortunately, fancied that all they needed to do was to produce a cheap article; and the consequence was, that their cheap article was refused, while an article of a better kind, and displaying more ingenuity in the manufacture, the produce of other countries, was preferred. He did not believe that the corn laws had much effect in raising the price of the manufactured articles of this country. Their influence on wages could not, he was sure, be described by a figure greater than a fraction. In point of fact, it was British capital that enabled the manufacturers of this country to compete—in the article of cotton, for instance—with the people of America, where wages were quite as high as in this country, and with the natives of India, where the rate of wages was the lowest in the world. How, then, had the cry against the agricultural interest been raised? Whose interest was it to have the corn laws repealed? It was the interest solely of the manufacturing capitalist, who had contrived to raise a large party in favour of that repeal, by the specious pretext that it would lead to a reduction of rents, and by obtaining the co-operation of a section in this country who were hostile to a political system based on the preponderance of the landed interest. He trusted that the House would prove to the country, by the calmness of the present debate, that honourable members, on both sides of the House, came to the consideration of the question of the repeal of the corn laws fully impressed with its deep importance to all classes of the people.

Scarcely any excitement was caused by this discussion. It seems, indeed, to have been regarded rather as an exercise in political speaking of some who viewed the matter in a philosophic, rather than in a practical light, and who had no real expectation of success. Only one of the Ministers was present during a debate which was destined, in its annual re-appearance, to become so formidable to the party of monopoly; and this Minister, it was remarked by one speaker, appeared to be taking "his evening siesta," doubtless "owing to weariness induced by his close attention to official duties"—a remark which elicited loud laughter. It must be confessed, however, that the slumber of the Minister was no unfit representation of the want of faith in corn law repeal which existed out of doors. It was certain that nothing but pressure from without could obtain even a modification of those laws in the teeth of the all-powerful aristocracy and their representatives in the Commons; but as yet the country took little part in the great question of the final emancipation of British industry. For a repeal of the poor laws there had been presented to the House not less than 235 petitions, with 190,000 signatures. The agitation—chiefly supported by the *Times* newspaper and a few socialistic reformers, like Mr. Fielden, against the law which, harsh as it seemed, was at bottom a really wise and humane measure for raising the people from that condition of acquiescence in misery and degradation to which the bad legislation of past years had so powerfully contributed to reduce them—had assumed formi-

dable dimensions, and stirred the country in every part; while for a repeal of the law which in every way depressed the energies of the people, only a few petitions, bearing at most about 24,000 signatures, had been presented. The debate on Mr. Villiers' motion was passed over without comment by the *Times*. But the final movement for the destruction of the landlords' monopoly dates from that year. The distress was increasing, and the men who were really watchful for the people's interests were already combining for a more extensive and vigorous political movement than had been seen since the passing of the Reform Act; while, as we have seen, the class of operatives who were suffering most by the general distress—the weavers—were fully alive to the true causes of that depression of trade and high price of food which had so much to do with the misery of the people.

CHAPTER LIV.

Spirit of Opposition to the Corn Laws in the Manufacturing Districts—Free Trade Tendencies of Manchester—Meeting of Merchants in that Town in 1834—Persistence of the New Borough in returning Free Trade Candidates—Condition of the People in Manchester during the abundant years 1832-35—Sudden Distress on Failure of the Harvest in 1836-38—Perseverance of the Landed Party in resisting all Change—Rejection of the Bill for permitting the Grinding of Wheat in Bond—Supposed Last Dying Speech of the Advocates of Free Trade in Corn—Mr. Villiers's solemn Warning of the Danger of Refusing Relief—The "East Retford of the Corn Laws"—Glasgow Petition presented by Earl Fitzwilliam—Temper of the House of Lords—Remarkable Declaration of Lord Melbourne—Public Dinner to Dr. Bowring at Manchester—Formation of the Anti-Corn Law Association—Modest Commencement of the Movement—The Provisional Committee—Mr. Bright, Richard Cobden—The Bolton Lecture on the Corn Laws—Movement in the Manchester Chamber of Commerce—The Association's Scheme of Agitation—Progress of the Movement—Humble Origin of the League—Room in Newall's Buildings—Rapid Spread of the Agitation—Movement in the Metropolis—Attitude of the Working Classes—Advocacy by the *Times*—Meeting of the Manchester Delegates in London—Opening of the Session—Omission of the Corn Laws from the Queen's Speech—Debate on the Address—Lord Brougham's Great Speech—Rejection of the Petition of the Delegates to be heard at the Bar of the House—Condition of the Movement at the Close of 1839.

WHILE the landed interest were thus showing their determination to maintain, at all hazards, the laws for preventing the importation of foreign corn, a spirit of opposition had been growing up in the large manufacturing towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire, which, though only partially shared in by the working classes, was already significant of the approaching downfall of the system of monopoly. The first use made by Manchester of its constitution as a political borough by the Reform Act was to send to Parliament Mr. Poulett Thomson and Mr. Mark Phillips, two members long conspicuous in the House for the zeal and ability with which they supported the principles of free trade. The Manchester newspapers generally advocated the same views; and Manchester became regarded as the centre of the Anti-Corn Law agitation. No organised movement, however, had yet been attempted. A series of good harvests from 1832 to 1835 rendered it extremely difficult to arouse public attention to the injustice which the bread law invariably inflicted under less favourable circumstances. Nevertheless, the effort was made. In January, 1834,

a meeting of merchants and manufacturers was held in the Manchester Exchange Committee-room, to consider how the cause of Corn Law repeal was to be forwarded, at which some powerful speeches were delivered by the members for the borough and other speakers of influence. A committee was appointed, which timidly endeavoured to avoid the appearance of a political agitation, and finally ended by doing nothing. Trade was not suffering from any particular depression, employment could be found, and food was comparatively cheap. On the dissolution of Parliament in that year by the new Tory administration of Sir Robert Peel, Manchester again returned the two free trade candidates in the face of the efforts of an unprogressive ministry to substitute its own candidate. The Peel administration were soon driven from office, and Mr. Poulett Thomson was again returned for Manchester, and became President of the Board of Trade, with a seat in the cabinet, having first stipulated that he should be free to speak and vote against the corn laws. "It was something," says Mr. Prentice, "that Manchester compelled this concession from colleagues far behind its member in the comprehension of a principle and boldness in giving it expression—something that Manchester, from the period of its enfranchisement to the repeal of the corn laws, always sent representatives to protest against the landlords' monopoly."

It was evident that, when the year of bad harvests and dear food should come, the cry of the people against the bread tax would be loudest in this great focus of manufacturing industry. At the beginning of 1836, the price of wheat reached £1 16s. the imperial quarter, the lowest point of depression which it had touched for some years. The cry of agricultural distress was immediately raised, and committees were appointed by both Houses of Parliament early in the session of 1836 to inquire into the subject; but the tenor of the information obtained did not bear out the views of the agricultural party. Indeed, it was found that so far from there being a decline, there had been an extension and improvement of cultivation and an increase of produce; and that so far from the agricultural labourer being in more than usual distress, his circumstances had greatly improved, his wages not having been reduced in proportion to the fall in the prices of necessaries. Trade, too, was enjoying one of those intervals of comparative prosperity in which the periodical visitation of hard times is naturally forgotten by the bulk of the people. "In Manchester," says the writer just quoted, "I had the gratification of again seeing the working man on a Saturday night helping his wife to carry home the heavy basket. There was no need for statistical tables to show that there was a great additional consumption of necessaries and comforts. The fact spoke out in the manifest improvement in the appearance of the multitudes, now well dressed, and presenting undeniable proofs that they were well-fed. I asked my foreman how the compositors in my office, whose wages had been the same sum weekly for a quarter of a century, were expending what they saved from the low price of food; and he said it was astonishing to see

how much they were laying out on good clothes and good furniture, besides what they were laying by for a future provision. And now again came the question from some—Why should it not always be thus? If a good harvest in England was productive of all this comfort, why should not the people of England have the advantage of a good harvest anywhere else? But then again came the question from others, Why should we agitate for cheap food, when wheat is only 4s. 6d. a bushel?"* It is not surprising that the leaders of the Manchester free traders found it difficult to obtain a hearing at such a time. But the tide was about to turn. The harvest of 1836 showed a considerable falling off compared with that of previous years. Wheat rose 70 per cent. higher than the prices of the previous year. Some heavy failures occurred in London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow; and in the following April many of the Lancashire factories were working only four days a week, and some thousands of hand-loom weavers were discharged. Towards the end of the previous year, an association for agitation against the corn laws had been formed in London, comprising twenty-two members of Parliament, and a number of manufacturers and gentlemen of Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Liverpool, and Glasgow. The body, however, was not representative, and did no more than contribute to keep public attention directed to the subject. The crop of 1837 was also inferior to that of previous abundant years, but wheat fell again from 61s. 9d. to 53s. Then came the severe winter of 1837-8, and again the unhappy dependents upon weekly wages found the price of bread more than double what it had been two years before. The distress was now general, and the time for movement had arrived.

The determined opposition of the landed interest in Parliament to all changes, however slight, in the laws for maintaining the price of food, may be said to have reached its height in the debate of the 9th of May, 1838, on the second reading of the bill for permitting the grinding of wheat in bond for foreign export. At that time British shipowners were in the habit of obtaining their supplies of food for the consumption of their crews in foreign ports. As none of that food need be brought into the country, and the captains and owners were necessarily free to buy where they pleased, it was impossible to suppose that they would supply their vessels with the heavily taxed articles of their own country. They must clearly be permitted to take the corn they wanted out of bond free of duty, or must continue to be driven to seek supplies elsewhere. This, in fact, was conceded as far as corn was concerned, but the ships had no means of grinding wheat into flour, or converting it into biscuit. It was shown that to relax the law slightly in this respect could lead to no possible loss to the landlord, would obviate the prevailing wasteful and circuitous system of obtaining stores from abroad, and would, besides, give employment to a great number of persons in our chief sea-ports. The project appeared so

* History of the "Anti-Corn Law League," by Richard Prentice, London, 1853, i., 46.

harmless that the first reading of the bill was carried by a majority of 127 to 92. The landowners, however, quickly took alarm. They dreaded all change, however trifling; and suggested that flour or biscuits might be more easy to smuggle than grain, and that the change might lead to a fraudulent importation of food to the injury of their own monopoly. These ideas rapidly spread in the agricultural districts. Petitions against the bill began to pour in from Buckinghamshire, where the Marquis of Chandos, who presented them, had been holding excited meetings; and when Colonel Seale rose to move the second reading, it was manifest that the bill was doomed. In vain it was pointed out that the bill provided that all flour so made should be absolutely exported within two months after being ground. The Marquis of Chandos, who led the opposition, told the House that he had no doubt the bill would afford a great advantage to the commercial, at the expense of the agricultural interest; that at the present moment the agriculturists were enjoying a little relief from the long period of distress under which they suffered, which referred, of course, to the high price of bread, by which the agriculturists were then so largely profiting, and added that "the only wish of the farmers was that the House would not interfere with them." Another representative of this party declared "that the last dying speech of the free traders in corn" had been made in a recent speech of Mr. Clay. It is a lamentable fact that Sir Robert Peel was among the most conspicuous of the speakers on this side.

Sir James Graham followed with a speech against the bill. The free traders had nothing to oppose to the numerical strength of their opponents, but a solemn warning of the danger and folly of the course which they were pursuing. Mr. Brotherton and Mr. Villiers avowed that they regarded the rejection of the bill as even to be desired, because tending "to hasten the downfall of the wicked corn laws." So little did their party concur in the view that the "last dying speech" of the free traders in corn had been spoken, that they looked forward to their defeat that night as the signal for the people to arouse. Mr. Villiers concluded his speech with the remarkable words, "If the measure be carried, it will open to our trade a new channel for profit and employment; but if it be rejected, it will, perhaps, be still more useful. This is just what is now required. What is most wanted is some practical illustration of the working of the corn laws and the spirit of those who maintain them; something to strike the imagination—something to arouse those who had too long kissed the rod which had scourged them. I look upon it as a good sign. All great changes are preceded by some wanton act of the power which was complained of and attacked. I regard it as the East Retford of the corn laws. To reject this measure would be like that preliminary folly which characterised those whom Heaven had marked as its victims." The warning was received with "laughter and loud cries of divide;" and the bill was finally rejected by a majority of 200 to 150.

A few months, however, began to show the truth

of these words. While the landlords were foolishly consoling themselves with the belief that the opposition to the corn laws was dead, a movement was commencing which was destined to force this question upon the Government, as the one great question of the day. The Manchester newspapers, in commenting upon the debate, regarded it rather as a sign of the necessity for further reform in the representation of the people, than as a signal for an extensive movement against the monopoly system. Elsewhere the corn laws had only partially been adopted as a rallying cry of Reformers; and the Chartists and extreme Radicals still looked coldly on what they were told was merely an employers' question: indeed, in many instances, the Chartists openly avowed themselves on the side of the landlords.

A few weeks after the debate on Colonel Seale's motion, Earl Fitzwilliam, a nobleman who had distinguished himself by his enlightened views on this question, presented a petition from a great number of inhabitants of Glasgow against the corn laws. "The debate that ensued," remarks the *Manchester Times* of July 7th, 1838, "was in most respects just of the character which always marks the treatment of a question affecting the profits of that House—of corn dealers on the one hand, and the comfortable subsistence of twenty-six millions of people on the other. We thought, however, we discovered some symptoms of fear, if not of repentance, on the part of one or two of the titled monopolists who spoke on the occasion. Apprehensions of short harvests, dear bread, and a probable famine, floated across their brains, and found utterance in some warning prognostications as to the effect of such accidents upon the fate of the question then under discussion. Their lordships are right; a wet July might come, August might find the country with scarcely a month's consumption of corn on hand, and the ports of Continental Europe drained for the supply of the United States. We are now entirely dependent on the still ungathered harvest for preservation against greater misery than ever afflicted a civilised community. To the corn laws it is owing that no sacks of wheat or other grain are filling the granaries of our own capitalists, or awaiting their orders in the stores of Hamburg or Odessa; and should starvation stalk through the land, every additional death will be attributed to those laws."

It was in the course of this discussion that Lord Melbourne uttered a remarkable declaration of the policy of the Ministry. He believed, he said, that the corn laws had acted well for the interests of all parties; and holding these opinions, he certainly would not attempt to alter the system which had been established, nor would he ever introduce any new system of corn laws founded on a different principle from the present, *unless a decided opinion was expressed on the subject by a large majority of the people*. It was probably far from the thought of the Minister who once declared it madness to interfere with these laws; and who regarded the theories of political economists generally with aversion, to recommend a general Anti-Corn-Law agitation; but his words served at least to remind Reformers that no relief could

be expected from Parliament until an overwhelming force of public opinion should be directed to the subject.

The Ministerial challenge was not long in finding a body of men able and willing to take it up, with a spirit determined to overcome all obstacles. Before the end of August, wheat had attained the price of £3 17s. the quarter—more than double the price of the same period in 1835. On the 10th of September, Dr. Bowring was invited to a public dinner at Manchester, on his way from Liverpool to Blackburn. He had recently returned from a mission to promote more free commercial intercourse with some foreign countries; and he gave to the Manchester people an eloquent account of the mischiefs which he had found everywhere traceable to our absurd Custom House laws. He showed how he had found the Hungarian nobles on the Danube ceasing to produce corn for the English market, and turning their capital to manufacturing those articles with which England, under a better system of international exchange, might have supplied them. He illustrated the folly of the fear of being reduced to what the Duke of Wellington had called the humiliating necessity of depending upon foreign lands for a supply of food by the case of Holland—a country entirely dependent upon foreign trade, and yet one in which the granaries were always well filled, and where the people knew at all times the real rate of wages, because, with a very slight alteration in price, they could always estimate what the quarter loaf would cost them and their families. He showed the meeting the wonderful results of the enlightened policy of the Pacha of Egypt, who had been converted to free-trade principles, declaring that he “thought it better to let corn come in and go out of the ports without any duty whatever.” Mr. Hadfield, one of the speakers on this memorable occasion, reminded his hearers that, although this law had been passed in the days of Toryism, against the will of the country, while petitions signed by millions were being presented against it, and when Lord Goderich had his house burnt over his head by an assemblage of Anti-Corn-Law rioters, no simultaneous popular effort had from that time to this been made to overturn it. It was time, he said, “to unite heart and hand on this question, and challenge the whole country to put their shoulder to the wheel, and get rid of a system alike offensive to the laws of God and man.” This appeal excited the enthusiasm of the company, which was still further aroused when another speaker, Mr. Howie, said that what had just fallen from the chairman reminded him that they had at Manchester no Anti-Corn-Law Association. He should propose that the present company at once form themselves into such an association, and though few in number, be the rolling stone that should gather strength in its progress. The proposition was considered by the company, and it was agreed that the meeting should form a committee to establish such an association, and meet on the following Monday.

The desultory opposition to the bread tax of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce—a body which had only presented one petition on the subject in seven years—was no longer sufficient to represent the feeling of that

great centre of industry. “Seven men,” says Frederic Bastiat, the eminent French economist, “united themselves in the month of October, 1838, and with that manly determination which characterises the Anglo-Saxon race, they resolved to overturn every monopoly by legal means, and accomplish, without disturbance, without effusion of blood, with the power only of opinion, a revolution as profound, perhaps more profound, than that which our fathers worked to effect in 1789.” The names of those seven members are now scarcely remembered out of Manchester, with the exception of Mr. Archibald Prentice, the historian of the League, whose newspaper, the *Manchester Times*, had fought with considerable talent, and with inexhaustible energy on the side of all the great reforms of this important period in our history. In that newspaper for the 13th of October, a list of the Provisional Committee of a new Anti-Corn-Law Association was for the first time published. It comprised thirty-seven names, chiefly of Manchester manufacturers, and ended with the modest note that, “Subscriptions, 5s. each, would be received by the members of that committee.” Such was the simple origin of that vast movement which, a few years later, compelled the very chiefs of the landowners’ party in Parliament to become the instruments for carrying out measures more sweeping than even the most ardent free-traders had regarded as possible. But men of influence were beginning to join the movement. The list of the Provisional Committee contained, at least, one name which afterwards became famous—that of Mr. John Bright. Three of them subsequently became members of Parliament, and another, Mr. George Wilson, was afterwards known as the permanent chairman of the League.

The name of the leader of the new movement, however, had not yet been added to the list. Mr. Bright, whose residence was at Rochdale, had not begun to give personal aid to the cause, and was scarcely known out of his native town, where his efforts to improve the moral and social condition of the working classes had, however, long made him conspicuous among his fellow-townsmen. The name of Richard Cobden, which appears in the additional list of the committee published a short time afterwards, was one more familiar in Manchester ears. Mr. Cobden was the son of a yeoman at Midhurst, in Sussex, who possessed a small property in that neighbourhood, which he cultivated till his death. The father was, however, not prosperous, and the son, we believe, owed his education to the kindness of a Chichester gentleman, a friend of his family. At an early age he was sent to London, and is said to have been employed in a warehouse in the City. From this position he was promoted to travel for the firm in whose service he was, and thus obtained some knowledge of Lancashire trade. Some time afterwards he found opportunities of starting in business with some fellow-clerks as calico printers in the neighbourhood of Clitheroe. The business prospered, and Mr. Cobden settled in Manchester, where he soon began to interest himself in local affairs. At that time the local govern-

ment of Manchester was in the hands of the lord of the manor, being governed by a borough reeve, constables, and others elected at the lord of the manor's court leet, exactly as it had been in the ancient times when Manchester consisted of ten streets and Salford of three; and Mr. Cobden was one of those who were chiefly instrumental in overturning this absurd system, and obtaining the municipal charter, which was at last conceded, after much opposition. He had already become known as a political writer, professing generally the views on trade, commerce, and international relations of the liberal school of political economists.

In 1835 there had been sent to the editor of the *Manchester Times*, for publication in that paper, some admirably written letters. They contained no internal evidence to guide in guessing as to who might be the writer; and the editor concluded that there was some man amongst them who, if he held a station that would enable him to take a part in public affairs, would exert a widely beneficial influence. "He might," says Mr. Prentice, in his interesting narrative of this incident, "be some young man in a warehouse who had thought deeply on political economy, and its practical application in our commercial policy, who might not be soon in a position to come before the public as an influential teacher; but we had, I had no doubt, somewhere amongst us, perhaps sitting solitary after his day's work in some obscure apartment, like Adam Smith in his quiet closet at Kirkcaldy, one inwardly and quietly conscious of his power, but patiently biding his time, to popularise the doctrines set forth in the 'Wealth of Nations,' and to make the multitude think as the philosopher had thought, and to act upon their convictions. I told many that a new man had come, and the question was often put amongst my friends—'Who is he?' In the course of that year, a pamphlet, published by Ridgway, under the title, 'England, Ireland, and America,' was put into my hand by a friend, inscribed 'From the author,' and I instantly recognised the handwriting of my unknown—much by me desired to be known—correspondent; and I was greatly gratified when I learned that Mr. Cobden, the author of the pamphlet, desired to meet me at my friend's house. I went with something of the same kind of feelings which I had experienced when I first, four years before, went to visit Jeremy Bentham, the father of the practical free traders; nor was I disappointed, except in one respect. I found a man who could enlighten by his knowledge, counsel by his prudence, and conciliate by his temper and manners; and who, if he found his way into the House of Commons, would secure its respectful attention; but I had been an actor amongst men who, from 1812 to 1832, had fought in the rough battle for parliamentary reform, and I missed in the unassuming gentleman before me, not the energy, but the apparent hardihood and dash which I had, forgetting the change of times, believed to be requisites to the success of a popular leader."

Mr. Cobden also published a pamphlet entitled "*Russia; by a Manchester Manufacturer.*" In 1837 he

made a journey through France, Belgium, and Switzerland; and in 1838 travelled through Germany. It was on his return from the latter tour that he joined the movement which he found preparing against the system of which the "Manchester manufacturer" had, like Dr. Bowring, been observing the effects in limiting our foreign trade. But the association were not long in finding in the energy and resources of this remarkable man their best support. The committee saw clearly that there could be no hope for the success of their movement, if they could not succeed in enlightening the body of the people on the nature and effects of the laws which they were seeking to overturn. One of their first acts, therefore, was to begin a system of political education for the people.

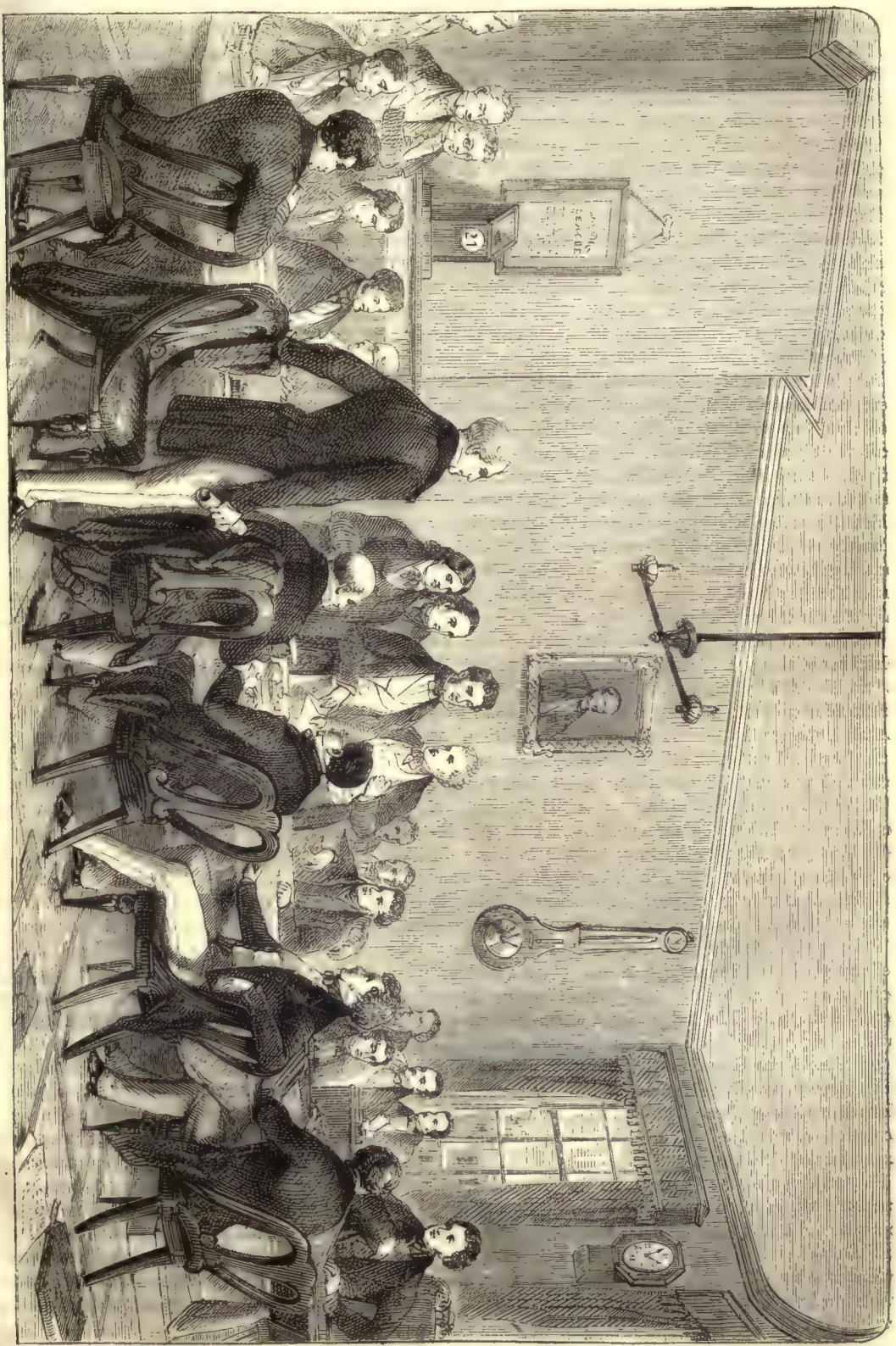
In September, 1838, a stranger had engaged a theatre in Bolton, to deliver a lecture on the corn laws. The audience, which were admitted by payment at the doors, were numerous; but it turned out that the lecturer was so ill prepared for his task as altogether to break down in it. The assemblage was about to end in a riot, when a young medical student named Paulton rushed on to the platform, at the request of the mayor and other friends, to address the people. His plea to be heard for a few moments was met with loud cries of "hear, hear" and "go on." An address of a quarter of an hour created a wish that he should be heard again. The people recovered their good humour, and the improvised lecturer ended by promising to open the theatre without a price of admission on that day week, when a lecture on the corn laws would be delivered, a promise which, for the present, satisfied the audience. The young speaker possessed considerable eloquence and general knowledge; and some manufacturers of Bolton, his friends, assisted him in collecting facts. Thus aided, he prepared and delivered his first lecture. The result clearly showed how the people might be reached, and how mistaken were those who thought that no interest could be excited on this subject. The lecture was received with enthusiasm, and was reported in the newspapers.

The new association were not long in inviting Mr. Paulton to deliver two lectures in the Corn Exchange, Manchester. The lectures were attended by a crowded audience, who received with enthusiasm the speaker's quotation from Lord Byron's "*Age of Bronze*:"—

"For what were all those landed patriots born?
To hunt, and vote, and raise the price of corn
Safe in their barns, these Sabine tillers sent
Their brethren out to battle. Why? for rent.
Year after year they voted cent. per cent.;
Blood, sweat, and tear-wrung millions. Why? for rent.
They roared, they dined, they drank, they swore they meant
To die for England. Why, then, live for rent?
And will they not repay the treasures lent?
No! Down with everything, and up with rent
Their good, ill, health, wealth, joy, or discontent,
Being, end, aim, religion—rent, rent, rent!"

The eloquent young lecturer soon re-appeared in the magnificent Town Hall of Birmingham, and continued to carry tidings of the new association for giving untaxed food and employment to the people of all the great manufacturing towns. The objects of the association were now declared to be to form a fund for diffusing in-

MEETING OF THE ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUE IN NEWALL'S BUILDINGS, MANCHESTER.



formation, either by lecture or pamphlet, to defray the expense of petitioning, and, above all, to create an organisation to bring numbers together in such force and with such energy of purpose as to secure the great object—the complete freedom of trade—by the destruction, not only of the corn monopoly, but of all the other monopolies which hang upon this monster grievance.

The sluggish Chamber of Commerce at length began to feel the pressure of the movement. The bulk of the members were still timid, but Mr. Cobden urged them to action in a speech abounding with familiar and forcible illustration. Why, he asked, were the incendiaries, of which the papers told them, enabled to get up their torch-light meetings? People do not quit comfortable homes, containing good beds, and furniture, and tables with something to spread upon them, to attend out-of-door night meetings. There were causes for those evils, and it behoved them to represent strongly what those causes were, and to warn the legislature of the dangers which were hanging over them. Surely it behoved them to read the signs of the times. If their trade should be ruined, the neighbourhood of Manchester must become the theatre where a fearful tragedy would be enacted, which it became their duty and their interest to avert by a timely effort to repeal the corn laws. The Chamber, thus urged, were induced to adopt a petition to the legislature for free trade, drawn up by Mr. Cobden, which they did almost unanimously.

Meanwhile, the first municipal election under the Manchester Charter of Incorporation had been held, at which Mr. Cobden, and a number of other gentlemen professing free trade views, had been chosen aldermen, not without formidable opposition. At a meeting held at Leeds, and attended by seven or eight thousand persons, the Chartists, under Mr. Feargus O'Connor, resisted the resolutions of the free-traders, on the ground that the movement was one only intended to give the manufacturers power to lower the wages of their workmen—a mistaken doctrine, but one not altogether without support in the writings of the free trade party, some of whom, with the common propensity of zealous advocates for adopting doubtful arguments as well as good ones in support of their objects, had put forth the statement that the British manufacturer required cheap food in order to get cheap labour, and thus to compete the better with foreign producers. The opposition of the Chartists created great confusion at almost every meeting held under the auspices of the Manchester Association. Bread, however, continued to rise, and the task of the association in rousing the country began to be easier.

Subscriptions began to pour in for the association, and the work went on; but the day was still distant when this provincial association, under its altered title of the Anti-Corn-Law League, should make itself recognised by the country at large as a power in the state, overwhelming in the justice of its cause, and in the faith, the energy, and the perseverance of its founders, and those whom they had enlisted in the progress of their struggle. Years afterwards, when that struggle was ended, and the

Leaguers found time to look back, Mr. Cobden said, "There are a number of gentlemen who, during the last seven years and a half, have been almost daily in attendance at the League Rooms in Newall's Buildings; and, bear in mind, for the first two or three years of our agitation it was a very hopeless matter: there was no *éclat*, no applause, the result of the powers we now enjoy. We sat in a small room, the same we now have, and we had a dingy red curtain drawn across the room, that we might not be chilled by the paucity of our numbers. Two or three were all that were here on one occasion; and I recollect saying to my friend Prentice, 'What a lucky thing it is the monopolists cannot draw aside that curtain, and see how many of us there are; for, if they could, they would not be much frightened.'"

On the 22nd of January, a public dinner was given by the Manchester Association to the members who, in the previous session, had voted in favour of Mr. Villiers' motion, at which it was resolved that, in order to secure unity and efficiency of action, delegates should be appointed by the several Anti-Corn-Law Associations of the kingdom to assemble as a Central Board in London at the opening of Parliament, to whom it was proposed to entrust, among other business, the duty of obtaining the services of such members of Parliament as were inclined to urge their cause with efficiency. It was stated at that meeting that a petition from Glasgow for the total repeal of the corn laws had been signed, in a few days, by 80,000 persons, and one from Leeds by 150,000 persons.

The year 1839 opened with bright prospects for the Anti-Corn-Law crusade. Times were, indeed, changed since pseudo-Liberals had been able to make the apathy of the country an excuse for withholding aid from those who had, on principle, continued to demand justice in the matter of the poor man's loaf. The movement was rapidly becoming general. Mr. Villiers had prophesied in the last session of Parliament that "the day was not far distant" when the landed interest would be compelled to treat this question with respect, and abandon the practice of shouting down the advocates of free trade in the Legislature. That day had now arrived, and sooner, probably, than the prophet himself had expected it. There was scarcely a large town or thickly-peopled district in Great Britain which had not moved, or which was not about to petition Parliament against the bread-tax. In many cases, political differences were not allowed to hinder the common fellowship of citizens having such an object as the overthrow of a system that threatened, sooner or later, to convert the mercantile community into a mass of bankruptcy, and to involve all classes in deep distress. A Sheffield newspaper came out with a woodcut representing an Englishman in fetters, sitting on an island, holding a diminutive loaf in his hand, with a Frenchman grinning at him, and holding up one at the same price and double the size; while a Russian stood by with another four times the size. Underneath the picture was the motto, "England, the envy and admiration of the world."

From the manufacturing districts the movement was spreading to the metropolis, where usually there had

been but little attention paid to this important subject. The various trades of London began to take part in the preparation of petitions, and to hold meetings. At some of these the working men carried resolutions against the petitions; and they made similar, though unsuccessful, attempts in various towns. But it was remarked that even while refusing to take preliminary measures for procuring relief from the bread-tax, they declared its injustice; in fact, the savage mood to which the prevalent distress was bringing the labouring classes began to manifest itself in a determination to postpone every question save that of their claim to a share of political power. They were not friendly to the middle class; but their ill-will could not be cited even as a proof of their indifference to the continuance of the corn law system. It began to appear as if the whole kingdom was occupied almost exclusively with the discussion of the question; and so irresistible was the general feeling on this vital point believed to be, that it was openly stated by the more influential Liberal journals that the fate of Lord Melbourne's Administration was expected entirely to depend on their own prudence in taking the lead in this matter, by a clear and distinct declaration on this subject to be made from the throne. Some said that Ministers would join the opponents of the corn laws; and dissolve Parliament on the question; but cautious friends of the movement advised the free-traders to put no faith in such a supposition.* It was seen that the Ministers could hope for nothing from such a course—that they would offend many of their present supporters, without obtaining a single new vote. It seemed more probable that they would merely encourage the agitation to a certain point, in the hope that it would absorb all other troublesome topics.

The Opposition, however, appear to have been by no means certain of the absurdity of the expectation that corn law repeal would be taken up by the Melbourne Administration as a bait for popularity out of doors; and, in the common course of party strategy, a section of the party appear to have determined to adopt the presumed tactics of their enemies. It was remarked that some Conservatives had signed requisitions for anti-corn law meetings; and at length the *Times*, the most powerful organ of that party, commenced a series of articles against the corn laws, remarkable for their ability.

At first sight, nothing appeared more calculated to aid the cause of the Manchester association than the newly-awakened zeal of this influential journal. On the 18th of January, 1839, the first of these manifestoes, which was read with so much alarm by the country squires and ultra Tories, made its appearance. Claiming credit for consistency, because, "twenty-three years ago, the same paper had opposed the corn laws," and remarking, as if, though silent on the subject, they had been occupied with it in their own minds ever since, that "nothing had happened to impair, but everything to confirm their censures," the writer declared that the present movement of the country for a redress of

grievances arose not from party or factious impulses, but was a genuine and intelligent effort to shake off a painful load. He warned the landed proprietary that if they attempted to stop the progress of this popular determination, it would mistake very glaringly its own interest, and would exaggerate its own power. "A law," the writer declared, "establishing a monopoly for the supply of food in favour of one particular class of the community, was really nothing better, though it might not sound so monstrous, as a similar monopoly possessed by Mehemet Ali." He told the landlords that if it were true that free trade in corn, and its consequent fall in prices, would throw corn lands out of cultivation, there was nothing to be done but to take to pasture. "How," he asked, "would our landowners like to see a portion of the stiff clay soil of Wiltshire turned into vineyards, with the grapes thereon raised under glass, and a prohibitory duty on all foreign wines imposed, for the sake of encouraging the home producer, who would thus be enabled to charge these same British landlords 50 per cent. more than the price of the highest flavoured foreign claret, champagne, &c., for his sour and unpalatable beverage? Just a parallel case is that of bolstering up, by bounties and prohibitions, the costly and inferior grain-crops of our coarser soil, many of which would supply our industrious countrymen with beef on moderate terms."

In short, no tract issued by the Anti-Corn-Law Association for the information of the hard-worked artisans of Lancashire and Yorkshire, could have been more thorough in its free-trade declaration than this powerful organ of the landed party. Shrewd free traders, however, were not deceived by this furious zeal for the adoption of the views of the manufacturing class. That the true object of the writer was to threaten the Ministry, and to frighten them from adopting a course so easily parodied by their opponents, was unmistakably manifested in the following significant conclusion of the article itself:—"We shall just add that the manœuvres now set on foot, and actively prosecuted by the Queen's Ministers, to degrade this vast national question into an instrument of their own factious and jobbing selfishness, will recoil upon them fearfully before they are one month older." When the opening of Parliament and the Queen's speech had revealed the Government policy, we find the same journal taxing the Ministers with having endeavoured to mislead their opponents by authorising their confidential friends to insinuate a division in the Cabinet on the subject of the corn tax, and sneering at Lord John Russell for having "found it necessary to sop the manufacturing interest by pledging himself, if not to introduce, to vote for a corn law modification." Thus did the party politicians of the day treat a question which was moving the country from end to end.

Under these favourable circumstances, but amid the warnings of their friends not to relax, or fall into the error of regarding the approaching fight as an easy one, the delegates from the great manufacturing towns were preparing to assemble in London. Statesmen bred in

* *Spectator*, January 19th, 1839.

the old time, when Toryism was supreme, and when popular clamour for bread was met with no other answer than the Riot Act and a detachment of dragoons, looked with little favour upon an irregular and unauthorised body claiming to represent the interests of the people so imperfectly represented in the Legislature. Such a precedent might lead to evil consequences. The fact that the Chartists, in spite of the Convention Act, were at the same time sending delegates, who were meeting in a sort of mock parliament, calling itself a National Convention, at an hotel in Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, and afterwards in Bolt Court, Fleet Street, was calculated to render the Manchester delegates still more distasteful to the authorities. The Anti-Corn-Law agitators, however, had a clearly-defined purpose, and rigidly excluded all other topics from their speeches, lectures, petitions, and tracts. They were men who well knew the grounds of what they demanded. They were not repudiators of the great truths of political economy, preaching a suicidal crusade against capital, or demanding an impossible distribution of the wealth of the country; but men prepared both practically and theoretically to maintain the justice of their cause. Their text-books were acknowledged authorities in political science; and their friends in Parliament, though few, comprised some of the soundest statesmen of the time. Parliament was to meet on the 5th of February, and on the day before, the delegates assembled at Brown's Hotel in Palace Yard, within a stone's throw of the entrance to that House of Commons whose proceedings they had come to watch. Manchester sent Messrs. J. B. Smith, R. H. Greg, C. J. S. Walker, W. Rawson, and George Wilson; Bolton, Messrs. Edmund Ashworth and A. W. Paulton; Liverpool, Messrs. Joshua Walmsley and J. Aikin; Glasgow, Messrs. Alexander Johnstone and William Weir; Leeds, Messrs. Edward Baines, jun., and Hamer Stanfield; Stockport, the Mayor, J. Slack, and the Town Clerk; Kendal, Messrs. J. Edmonstone, W. Wilson, and Alderman Isaac Wilson; Huddersfield, Messrs. Brook and Shaw; Preston, Mr. Parker; Birmingham, Messrs. Joseph Sturge, Bradford, and E. Edwards; London, Colonel Thompson, W. Weymouth, Dr. Bowring, and M. A. Taylor. Mr. Villiers, the faithful representative of their cause in Parliament; Mr. Thornley, member for Wolverhampton; and Mr. Ewart, lately member for Liverpool, were also present. The next day the delegates, increased in numbers, met, and passed a kind of self-denying ordinance, in the name of their manufacturing constituents, that while they demanded a repeal of all restrictions on the importation of articles of subsistence, they were prepared to resign all claims to the protection of home manufacturers. They also resolved to meet from day to day during the discussions on the corn laws, and to invite Mr. Villiers to include in his motion that evidence be heard at the bar of the House. They then separated to attend the House of Commons at the opening of the Parliamentary session.

Scarcely a month had passed since Ministerial and Opposition organs had seemed to vie with each other in the struggle to be first to take up the corn law question; but those who observed closely the political horizon

knew that there was already a considerable change in the position. The threat of a section of the Tories, who were growing in popularity, to take the lead, if compelled, in the matter of the bread laws, had had its effect. If there had been any serious intention to move in the matter, when Lord John Russell, a short time previously, had addressed a letter to the electors of Stroud, declaring the existing corn laws indefensible, it had already evaporated. When the Queen's Speech was delivered, it was found to contain no allusion to the subject. It was introduced into the debate on the address, but only to show the imbecility of the Government. In the Upper House the Prime Minister had nothing to say to the taunts of the Opposition, but that the question had been regarded by the Ministry, from the very first commencement and constitution of the present Government, as an open one, or one on which every member of the Cabinet was at liberty to speak and vote in his own way. He believed that a majority of its members were favourable to a revision of those laws, but if the House inferred his (Lord Melbourne's) opinion thereon, he said it was likely to infer erroneously. He was not willing to enter into a debate on the corn laws then. Finally, he told their lordships and the country that "though he was not prepared to pledge himself to the support of the present system as the best that could be devised, he was not, on the other hand, prepared to pledge himself to any change or alteration of the law as it stood at present."

The Opposition, whose policy was to weaken and degrade in the eyes of the country the ministry to whom they gave a partial support, were not slow in showing that they had no serious intention of giving relief to the people. The landed interest were determined to uphold the system. Sir Robert Peel, their most conspicuous representative, was firm upon that point; and two days later, when a member presented a petition against the corn laws, signed by 13,000 of his constituents, he arose and, with vehement gesticulation, protested against any statement being made on the petition, as contrary to the rules of the House. The corn law repealers, however, were equally determined to press their point, and to throw upon the House the odium, if they were so determined, of endeavouring to stifle inquiry. It had been resolved by the delegates that Mr. Villiers should move that members of their body be heard at the bar of the House in support of the allegations of their petition presented on the 15th instant, complaining of the operation of the corn laws. Among the earliest opponents of that motion was Lord John Russell, who, on the evening when Mr. Villiers gave the customary notice of intention, disgusted the free trade party in the house by announcing his hostility to the motion. This speech, from the man whose name had been associated with liberal measures, "caused," says Miss Martineau, "a stronger sensation than some of the longest he had ever delivered. It was copied in the newspapers, with a declaration that it made one's blood boil; and the universal impression, among men of all parties, seems to have been that it proved him so unaware of the existing circumstances

and temper of the nation, as to injure his immediate reputation and influence, and to weaken him, unaccountably to himself, in every one of the various positions in regard to the Corn Law question, in which he afterwards endeavoured to establish himself. He said 'the impression on his mind was that it would be his duty to oppose the motion as to hearing evidence at the bar. He had not, as yet, found sufficient reasons or precedents to induce him to adopt that course. At the same time he must say that, as there would be a great deal of discussion relating to facts, when a mode was proposed which he thought was conformable to precedent, and not inconvenient to the House, by which these facts could be ascertained, he should be willing, although not ready to propose it himself, to support a motion so as to ascertain the facts.' This might have been taken as a matter of course from Sir Robert Peel in those days—this speech about propriety and precedent, and the convenience of the House, in regard to a matter about which 3,000,000 of the best subjects in the empire had sent up representatives to London, and a message to Parliament. Such a speech would have suited Sir R. Peel's then position and views with regard to the corn laws. But Lord John Russell had declared to his Stroud constituents that the existing corn laws were indefensible; and he declared on this very night that he believed the time to be come for a change. The delegates who were analysing the House now knew where to place Lord John Russell on their lists. He disapproved the corn laws in the abstract—just as the Carolina planters disapprove slavery in the abstract. In both cases, when an opportunity for acting upon that disapprobation occurs, the action goes over to the other side."

It had been intended that Earl Fitzwilliam, one of the few members of the House of Peers who stood by the people in this struggle, should move for a similar object in the Upper House; but he was prevented by an attack of illness. It was soon found that the cause of the Manchester party, however, lost nothing by the fact. The position was taken by Lord Brougham, who, on Monday, the 18th of February, delivered a speech of remarkable eloquence and clearness of reasoning, and one which was long remembered in that assembly of great landowners. "His impressive delivery," says a contemporary, who pronounces the speech "a fine display of rhetorical power, sustaining Lord Brougham's reputation as the first orator of his day," gave force to his well-combined arguments, which came with the air of novelty as well as strength on the hearer. Though he stood the solitary supporter of his side of the question in the House of Lords, it seemed as if all they could achieve was a mere nibble to the elaborate and energetic statement which he had produced. His reply was an adroit mixture of courteous sarcasm with cutting reproof. "His opponents," observes the writer just quoted, "exhibited a bull-headed resolution to maintain the rent-raising laws." This, however, describes but mildly the excitement which prevailed in that usually calm as-

sembly, as the orator was occupied nearly three hours in demolishing, one by one, their favourite fallacies. He reminded them of the extraordinary interest which the subject was exciting throughout the country; and that the House was not asked in the first instance to decide for or against the continuance of the existing laws, but merely to consider and examine the case which the opponents of those laws were anxious to lay before them. He addressed them especially as the highest court of judicature in the realm. As grave, calm, deliberate men, they were entreated to hear—only to hear—before rejecting the prayers of numerous wealthy and intelligent classes of their fellow-subjects. He appeared, he told them, as advocate for the country—for all classes and all interests; and no word against any one class or condition of men should escape his lips. He then proceeded to state the case, which, if permitted, he was prepared to prove by evidence or oath at their lordships' bar. He told, among other strange evidences of the evil working of these pernicious laws, how one Newcastle house alone had purchased foreign grain to the amount of £100,000, but their cargo arriving just as the duty was raised, by one of those sudden and unexpected jerks which were the result of the present law, they had been compelled to put it in bond, where, within sight of a half-fed people, it had laid for years, until interest and expenses had swallowed up its value. The orator then, rising with his subject, exclaimed:—"I earnestly implore that you will not reject my request; for, believe me, my lords, if you do reject it, the day will come when you will say, 'Better had it been for us if we had thought twice.' The day will come when this reflection will be too late, and when your repentance will not supply the place of a wise compliance now. When I say this, I am quite conscious that your lordships are a body of men the last in the world likely to be influenced by anything bearing the most remote semblance of menace; and I am the last man to advance anything which could bear that construction; but, at the same time, I know that advice is not lost on your lordships, but that you are ever disposed candidly to take it into your best and most serious consideration. I shall add but one word more to induce your lordships to listen to the prayer of the petitioners, who earnestly implore to be heard, not by counsel, but by evidence at your lordships' bar. Whatever resolution you ultimately come to, supposing, even, that it be to do nothing against the present corn laws, stick to them, if you will, in the minutest detail; re-enact them, if you will; resolve not to hear a word against them: but, for God's sake, do not form this resolution till after you have heard the evidence I tender you. I protest to you that if I were the most strenuous advocate of these laws, if I were the most unalterably fixed in my resolution that nothing should make me judge against them; if I were determined beforehand—though this would hardly be a rational determination; though this would hardly be a proceeding worthy of a judge, whose business it is to hear before he decides—but even were I thus pre-determined that nothing whatever should induce me

to give up the corn laws, I should deem this pre-determination on my part, not as an argument for refusing to go into the inquiry, but, on the contrary, as the strongest inducement I could have for permitting the investigation before I published my final resolution to the country. My lords, let me put it most seriously to you, what will be the consequences of such a fact going forth to the manufacturers, as that, when evidence was offered at the bar of your House in proof of eight propositions, every one of them vitally affecting the interests of the trade, the manufactures, the commerce, the well-being of the country—the deep importance of which no man denies, the possibility of proving which no man can reasonably call in question, the truth of which is so solemnly asserted, the proof of which is tendered on oath—what will be said, I ask, if those propositions are arbitrarily thrown to the winds—are put down by the mute eloquence of numbers, by the mere force of an overwhelming Parliamentary majority, and the people of England are told, ‘Parliament has made up its mind about the matter. Go your way, return to your empty shops, repair to your ruined manufactures, or hie away to foreign countries; do what you like, we want none of your evidence, we care not for your testimony, we despise your facts. We have made up our minds to this foregone conclusion; and, lest your evidence might shake our determination, we won’t run the risk of listening to it at all.’ Rely upon it, my lords, that a refusal on your part would be accompanied by the most unwelcome suspicions and comments on the part of the country. It is a much more pleasing task to contemplate the happy effects of the opposite case—of your acceding to my request that you hear this evidence. I can conceive no earthly event which would tend more to reconcile—if there has ever been a falling out—the people of this country to the established order of things, to the order to which your lordships belong, than your candid consideration of, your paternal listening to the application of those petitioners; your opening wide your doors to the people’s prayers; your not shutting out the proffered evidence as to their distresses, and the remedy which they propose for them.”

This eloquent appeal was in vain. The House, doubtless, saw nothing in it but the view of the recently-created peer, who had not sat long enough in the atmosphere of aristocratic prejudice to forget the old arts of the popular orator and self-made man. They heard in his warning no solemn utterance of the people’s wishes; and they believed themselves too firmly entrenched in the privileges of their class to dread the excitement which he had foretold. The Duke of Buckingham curtly announced his firm resolution to oppose the motion. Lord Stanhope refused to be a party to “a mere compliment to the political economy of England, or to gratify the inordinate grasping after gain which distinguished the English manufacturers.” The Duke of Richmond, long one of the most conspicuous of the Protectionist party in that House, declared, with a sneer, that he was surprised to hear that the manufacturing interest was at a low ebb, as it appeared that they had abundance of money for the construction of railroads, docks, and other

purposes; and added that he “felt it his duty, though it was an unpopular course, to meet the motion to hear evidence by a direct negative.” The Prime Minister, as before, treated the question with well-balanced antithetic and meaningless phrases; while the Duke of Wellington warned the House that this was a deep-laid conspiracy to entrap them, and that the real object of the motion was not, as Lord Melbourne supposed, to create delay, but to accelerate the attainment of the repeal of the corn laws; “an object,” he added, “to be attained rather by clamour than by fair reasoning and inquiry.”

When Lord Brougham rose to reply, the House was in some disorder. Several peers were ostentatiously displaying their resolution not to be persuaded, by rising from their places to go. The orator, however, was not to be daunted by this scene. Rising from his place, and looking towards the disturbers, he said: “I perceive that you have already made up your minds, and that you think it unnecessary to hear both sides.” Then turning to Lord Wynford, who, like himself, had risen by his talents as a lawyer, he said, “The noble and learned lord opposite, I see, is allowing his old judicial habit of hearing before he decides to prevail over him”—a remark which brought forth a loud cheer from his brother peer. Then to the peers who were still interrupting, Lord Brougham observed, somewhat angrily, “You don’t wish to hear the reply, don’t you? Ay, but you shall, whether you like it or not.” Laughter followed this expression of dogged resolution; but the speaker continued: “Why, I have been accustomed to this all my life. It is nothing to the House of Commons. But there,” he added, in a significant tone, “we were always heard.” This reproach had the effect of somewhat abating the laughter which had broken out afresh at the noble lord’s allusion to his experiences as a member of the Lower House, on which the undaunted orator quietly remarked, “Ay, now you have gained your judicial dignity, and show more willingness to hear.” The motion, as might be expected, failed. The Lord Chancellor decided that “the non-contents have it,” and there was no division.

The discussion in the Commons took place on the following day. It was preceded by the presentation of a great number of petitions—the Speaker having taken the chair at three o’clock, in order to afford members an opportunity of bringing them up before the debate began. As in the Lords, the petitions in favour of the corn laws were most numerous; but the signatures they bore were few in comparison with the names attached to the free-trade petitions, and the places they came from, with few exceptions, were obscure in a remarkable degree. Lord Sandon, son of the Earl of Harrowby, presented one of these petitions from Liverpool; but with no statement of the numbers signing it. His colleague, Mr. Cresswell, had charge of the Liverpool petition for total repeal, signed by 26,000 persons. Mr. Mark Phillips presented twenty-five petitions, signed by 27,366 inhabitants of Manchester; and another from 4,380 hand-loom weavers, complaining that in consequence of the high price of bread they were compelled to work fifteen hours a day,

and could not obtain the necessaries of life. Mr. Villiers then laid upon the table an imposing heap of petitions, including the one on which he founded his motion:—"That J. B. Smith, R. H. Greg, and others, be heard at the bar of this House by their witnesses, agents, or counsel, in support of the allegations of their petition presented to the House on the 15th day of this instant February, complaining of the operation of the corn laws." "Mr. Villiers's speech that night," says Miss Martineau, "was not lost. It was a statement of singular force and clearness, and the occasion was destined to great celebrity." He appealed to the mem-

linen, and hardware manufactures, the immense capital invested, and the large number of persons employed in their production. He called the attention of the House to the striking change in the character of English dealings with foreigners which had lately been observed. Customers were becoming rivals. The process was constantly going on. The petitioners wished to apprise the Legislature of the indications of approaching evils, which, though they would feel them at first, must finally be shared by millions of the people. He was prepared, he said, to prove that these evils might be in a great measure averted; that it was not until they had lost



H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF KENT.

bers as men of business, and confined himself chiefly to illustrations of the injurious effect of the corn laws on the commerce and manufactures of the country, and to arguments in favour of the mode of proving their cause which the petitioners had selected. He began by describing the petitioners. They represented Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham, Derby, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and the Tower Hamlets—places, the sum of whose population exceeded two millions, and which would be at once recognised as the seats of the great staple manufactures of the country. He dwelt upon the importance of the cotton, woollen,

hope of the English market for their raw produce, that the continental nations submitted to the retaliatory tariff imposed by their governments. He told them, with a moderation which might have won assent from a body less resolved, that the petitioners would not ask the House at once to repeal these laws; but they stated that these important consequences of the laws, so deeply affecting their interests, were not fully within the range of specific and distinct proof. There was nothing in the completion of their case that required more than a limited period of time, and they only repeated that which experience had forced on them, and which expe-

rience, when known to the House, might influence its judgment in discussing the general policy of maintaining those laws. They did not come there to detail a sad story of general distress, to excite pity for their losses, or to influence the passions of the people. They only came to the House to apprise honourable members, as reasonable men, having a sense of the obligation of the trust reposed in them, of the coming evil, which when it came would be shared by them as by millions of their fellow-countrymen. "They cannot," he continued, "be told that they are desirous of changing a law of which there has not been sufficient experience, or that they ever approved of. They come here to prove that all they predicted of its consequences nearly a quarter of a century since has been verified, and that they have suffered all they expected from it; and now, when they are hourly feeling its effects in a stronger degree, they ask you only to hear the evidence of facts which would show it. Upon what possible ground," he asked, in continuation, "can you refuse them this request? This is really no trifling matter, and I trust it will not be lightly dismissed. It is the application of the great body of the middle classes, and the most reflecting portion of the working class who appeal to this House. They approach you in a manner the least objectionable that is possible. They offer you no intimidation; they come here with no menace, with no violence; but even with consideration for, and deference to, your supposed opinions. It is the same Parliament that refused to alter the law last year, and they do not come now to you at once and hastily, to ask you to repeal the law; but they request you to hear the grounds on which they made the demand, and on which they think that you ought to re-consider your decision."

Mr. Strutt, in seconding the motion, said that his constituents, the silk manufacturers of Derby, had stated in their petitions that they willingly relinquished protection for their own trade if the trade in corn were set free. Of the ministers, Sir J. Hobhouse, Lord Morpeth, and Mr. Poulett Thompson took advantage of the question being deemed an open one, to speak for the motion. The other ministers who voted, including Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, were against it. It was on this occasion that Lord Stanley offended the earnest men who had determined to overthrow these unjust laws, by a foolish joke on a subject so deeply affecting the interests of his constituents. He had heard the manufacturers, he said, compared by a gentleman of his acquaintance to a match-girl who solicited his charity in the street, and who, having obtained it, remarked, "Bless you, sir, I lose on every match I sell; but, God be praised, I sell a great many of them;" and so said the manufacturers, "We lose on every article we sell, but, God be praised, our manufactures have increased amazingly, and the only mischief is, that other nations are increasing theirs too;" an illustration which is reported to have occasioned much laughter. But the picture drawn by Lord Howick of the proposed examination of the petitioners at the bar, was the most effective joke of the occasion. He sketched the variety of

subjects bearing on the question, which would be touched on by thirty or forty cross-examiners, each anxious to draw forth views in support of his own opinions. "Let members," he said, "figure to themselves the picture which the House would present at half-past seven o'clock. There would be their unhappy Chairman in his seat—whether he would be listening to the evidence, or whether he would be writing verses, or whether he might occasionally indulge in a little repose, it was not for him to say. The great majority of members would be scattered in different places, and it would be a very good evening on which members might be able to form engagements to dine out, which it was not much in their power to do usually. The honourable member for Manchester had presented a petition, praying that this inquiry might take place. He should, therefore, feel it to be his duty to attend in his place on such occasions; but he would be occupying the bench, on which he usually sat, nearly alone, and he would be rather inclined to follow the example of the worthy Chairman, than to attend to the business which was going on."

The motion was defeated, the Commons deciding by a majority of 361 to 172 that they would not even hear evidence on the subject. It was angrily remarked by the newspapers that the Lords, who had resolved that they had "no time to inquire" on Monday, did not sit at all on Wednesday; and that the Commons, who thought one night enough for the discussion of a question affecting the vital interests of the people, assembled at four o'clock on the following day, and adjourned at six. The association met on the following day, their numbers swelled by a numerous attendance of free traders of the metropolis. There were some who had hoped that they would, at least, have been granted a hearing, and these were loud in their expressions of indignation. Others, who had taken a less sanguine view, and had not been deceived into a belief that their battle was about to be an easy one, were excited by the contemptuous manner in which their petitions had been received. But there was no sign of a falling off in their determination to persevere to the end. At that meeting the newspapers favourable to the cause for the first time noticed a speaker whose name was afterwards to become so familiar to them in connection with this struggle. This was Mr. Cobden. He told his brother delegates that "there was no cause for despondency. They were the real representatives of three millions of people—a far greater number of constituents than the House over the way could boast of. They well knew that no great principle was ever indebted to Parliament for success—the victory must be gained out of doors. The great towns of Britain had extended the right hand of fellowship to each other; and their alliance would be a Hanseatic league against their feudal corn law plunderers. Let them remember the result of the union of the Hanse Towns. He had sailed up the Rhine, the Danube, and the Elbe, and had exulted over the ruins of the castles once inhabited by the feudal landlords, but which now only served to make a landscape picturesque. Instead of those baronial residences, there were now

fertile vineyards, cultivated by a prosperous peasantry. Repeal the corn laws, and then, and not till then, England would have a contented, a prosperous, and a rich peasantry, such as there was in other countries." He then continued:—"Sir Robert Peel had said that this would be a labourer's question: he should find it so—an agricultural labourer's question. They would go each and lay before the agricultural labourers the information they had intended to lay before the House of Commons; and even if they were compelled to go into every village, those facts should be known. They had been told by Mr. Cayley that they had the power to regulate wages; why, they had no more the power of regulating the price of labour than they had the power of regulating the catch of mackerel. But Mr. Cayley had forgotten that that was an argument which acted two ways; if they had the power of regulating the wages of the operative spinners or weavers, surely the landlords had the power of regulating the wages of the agricultural labourers; and what were the wages the agricultural labourers got, in comparison with the manufacturing labourers? He and his partner had in their employment upwards of 1,000 men; they paid 400 of these men, upon an average of years, 22s. a-week, and they had no person in their manufactories so badly paid, in proportion to his work, as many labourers in the country."

A public dinner at one of the theatres had been offered to the chief members of the association, but was declined. They were going back to Manchester, to give an account of their proceedings, and to concert measures for a more extensive movement. They had seen the futility of petitions to a House of landowners, against the landlords' laws; and they resolved to set to work in earnest to create that full tide of public opinion in their favour without which the prime minister himself had told them that nothing could be done. "This expression of the predominant opinion in the House of Commons," says the "Annual Register" for 1839, "had the effect of putting the question to rest." And such was, no doubt, the opinion of the landlords themselves, who, secure in their Parliamentary majority, troubled themselves but little with the association, which continued to hold its meetings in the little room in Newall's Buildings, Manchester. Wheat had again fallen; and, with the increased employment for the people which the summer generally brings with it, the corn law agitation appeared to have subsided. The evil effects of the provision laws, however, were sure, ere long, to manifest themselves again; and, meanwhile, the Manchester men laboured with a zeal which made their success only a question of time.

CHAPTER LV.

Coal Trade—Employment of Children—Lord Ashley's Bill—Attempt of Francis on the Life of the Queen: he is Transported for Life—Similar Attempt by a Deformed Youth—Change in the Law respecting Attacks on the Sovereign—Lord Ashburton's Treaty with America—Oregon Boundary—Right of Search—Repudiation of Debts by Pennsylvania—Rev. Sidney Smith—Mr. Everett, Mr. Webster—War in Afghanistan—Earl of Ellenborough—General Pollock joins Brigadier Wild.

THE vast development of the coal trade, which con-

tributed so materially to our national prosperity, occasioned the employment of a large number of persons at high rates of wages. Upwards of 118,000 people were working in coal mines. In the county of Durham there were more persons thus employed under ground than in cultivating the surface. It was a kind of work at which women and children could earn money, and in some of the collieries their labour was made available to a very large extent. It may be supposed that this practice entailed upon the boys and girls so employed the most serious evils, physical and moral. When this state of things began to attract public attention, an extensive inquiry was instituted by the "Children's Employment Commission," which prepared three reports, presented to Parliament in 1842. The commissioners collected a large mass of evidence at the collieries which brought to light facts of the most astounding nature as to the cruelty and demoralisation connected with the employment of women and children in coal mines. It seemed almost incredible that such practices could have existed in a civilised country, and showed the extent to which the thirst for gain will carry men, under circumstances where they can count upon impunity, and evade the censure of public opinion. Lord Ashley took up the subject with his usual earnestness in all questions affecting the welfare of the working classes, and in the session of 1842 he brought in a bill founded upon the reports of the commission. The statement of facts with which he introduced the measure excited the astonishment and indignation of the House, and greatly shocked the moral sense of the country.

If it had been only the large owners of mines that were concerned, he said, there would have been no necessity for legislative interference. The health of those employed under ground depends, of course, upon the ventilation and drainage of the pits, which differ according to the depth of the seams of coal, and these vary from ten inches in some places to ten or twenty feet in others. In South Staffordshire, for instance, says Dr. Mitchel, the coal beds are sufficiently thick to allow abundance of room; the mines are warm and dry, and there is a supply of fresh air. The case is pretty much the same in Northumberland, Cumberland, and South Durham, with some exceptions in the last place and in North Durham. In Warwickshire and Lancashire the mines are damp, and the water in them is sometimes deep. In Derbyshire it was found that black damp very much abounded, and the ventilation in general was exceedingly imperfect. Hence fatal explosions frequently took place; the work-people were distressed by the quantity of carbonic acid gas which they were compelled to inhale, and the pits were so hot as to add greatly to the fatigue of their labour. Some pits were dry and comfortable, but many were so wet that the people had to work all day over their shoes in water, at the same time that the water dropped or "rained" upon them from the roof, so that in a short time their clothes were drenched, and in that condition they toiled on fourteen or sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, which were the regular hours of labour. It appeared that in the West

Riding of Yorkshire there were very few collieries in which the main road exceeded a yard in height; in some it did not exceed twenty-eight inches, and in some it was less than twenty-two inches; so that in such places the youngest child could not pass along without great pain and in the most constrained posture. In East Scotland, where the side roads did not exceed from twenty-two to twenty-eight inches in height, the working places were sometimes from 100 to 200 yards distant from the main road, and through those passages females had to crawl backwards and forwards with their carts. The whole of those places were in a deplorable state as to ventilation, and the drainage was quite as bad. The same was reported of the roads in North and South Wales, where in most cases the ventilation was altogether neglected.

In these places, far down under the surface of the earth, the great majority of those employed were children, many of them almost infants. The report stated that in South Staffordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, and Cumberland, children began to work at seven years of age; about Halifax, Bradford, and Leeds, at six; in Derbyshire and South Durham, at five and six; in Lancashire, at five; and near Oldham, as early as four. Five or six was a common age in the east of Scotland; in the west of Scotland, eight; and in South Wales four was a very usual age. The report added that in the south of Ireland no children at all were employed, and that all the underground work which in England, Scotland, and Wales was done by young children, was done in Ireland by young persons between the ages of thirteen and eighteen; and in none of the collieries of that country was a single instance known of a female of any age being employed under ground. Referring to this fact, Lord Ashley said, "I have often admired the generosity of the Irish people, and I must say that if this is to be taken as a specimen of their barbarism, I would not exchange it for all the refinement and polish of the most civilised nations of the globe."

The nature of the employment in which the children were engaged was calculated to brutalise them in every sense. They were obliged to crawl along the low passages with barely room for their persons in that posture, each dragging a load of coals in a cart by means of a chain which was fastened to a girdle borne round the waist, the chain passing between the legs. This they dragged through a passage often not as good as a common sewer, in an atmosphere almost stifling. One of the witnesses, Robert North, said, "I went into the pit at seven years of age; when I drew by the girdle and chain, the skin was broken, and the blood ran down. If we said anything, they would beat us. I have seen many draw at six. They must do it or be beat. They cannot straighten their backs during the day. I have sometimes pulled till my hips hurt me so that I have not known what to do with myself." At this sort of work girls were employed as well as boys, and they commonly worked quite naked down to the waist, the rest of the dress being a pair of loose trowsers, and in this condi-

tion they were obliged to serve adult colliers who worked without any clothing at all. A sub-commission remarked upon this practice: "Any sight more disgusting, indecent, and revolting, can scarcely be imagined than these girls at work." The grossest immorality was the natural consequence. Lord Ashley remarked that "nothing could be more graphic and touching than the evidence of many of these poor girls, insulted, oppressed, and even corrupted as they were. There exists in them oftentimes, nevertheless, a simplicity and kindness which render tenfold more heartrending that system which forces away these young people from the holier and purer duties which Providence appoints for them, to put them to occupations so unsuited, so harsh, so degrading. It appears that they drag these heavy weights, some 12,000, some 14,000, and some 16,000 yards daily. In some cases they carried burdens on their backs, varying from three quarters of a cwt. to 3 cwt." In Scotland a sub-commission found one little girl, six years of age, carrying an eight stone weight, fourteen times a day, a journey equal in distance to the height of St. Paul's Cathedral. The commissioner adds, "And it not unfrequently happens that the tugs break, and the load falls upon those females who are following, who are, of course, struck off the ladders. However incredible it may be, yet I have taken the evidence of fathers, who have ruptured themselves by straining to lift coals on to their children's backs."

There was much more in the evidence too revolting to be quoted. It is a dark chapter in our industrial history. But without those dark shades, no historical portraiture of British society would be a faithful delineation of all its aspects, or would exhibit the hideous contrasts between the highest refinement, the brightest intelligence, and the purest Christianity, in conjunction with the most shocking inhumanity, barbarism, and moral debasement. The report of the commission was charged with exaggeration, but there was no denying the main facts. The bill of Lord Ashley was passed almost unanimously by the Commons. In the Lords it was subjected to considerable opposition, and some amendments were introduced. The amendments were adopted by the Commons, and on the 10th of August, 1842, the act was passed "to prohibit the employment of women and girls in mines and collieries, to regulate the employment of boys, and to make other provisions relating to persons working therein. The act prohibited the employment of any boys under ground, in a colliery, who were under the age of ten years."

The example of Oxford, who made an attempt on the life of the Queen, was followed by another crazy youth, named Francis, excited by a similar morbid passion for notoriety. On the 13th of May, 1842, the Queen and Prince Albert were returning to Buckingham Palace down Constitution Hill in a barouche and four, when a man who had been leaning against the wall of the palace garden went up to the carriage, drew a pistol from his pocket, and fired at the Queen. Her Majesty was untouched, and seemed unaware of the danger. The assassin was observed by Prince Albert, and pointed out

by him to one of the outriders, who dismounted to pursue him; but he had been at once arrested by other persons. The carriage, which was driving at a rapid pace, no sooner arrived at the palace, than a messenger was sent to the Duchess of Kent, to announce the Queen's danger and her safety. The duchess hastened to the palace, and embracing her daughter, burst into a flood of tears, the Queen endeavouring to re-assure her with affectionate anxiety. The prisoner, John Francis, the son of a machinist or stage carpenter at Covent Garden Theatre, having been twice examined by the Privy Council, was committed to Newgate for trial at the next session of the Central Criminal Court on a charge of shooting at the Queen with a loaded pistol. He was only twenty years of age, rather good-looking, with a dark complexion, middle stature, and respectably dressed.

The Queen took her accustomed airing next day, taking the same route, in the same sort of carriage. A great multitude had assembled round the palace to express their congratulations, which they did by loud cheering, and the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, in acknowledgment of which the Queen and the Prince graciously bowed and smiled. Her carriage was followed by a number of gentlemen on horseback, and the drive was described as a triumphal progress. In the evening the Queen and Prince Albert went to the Italian Opera, when the audience broke forth into tumultuous applause, called for the National Anthem, and cheered at almost every line.

The trial of Francis took place on the 17th of June, before Chief Justice Tindal, Baron Gurney, and Justice Patteson. He looked dejected, and pleaded "Not Guilty" in a very feeble voice. The principal witness was Colonel Arbuthnot, one of the equerries who was riding close to the Queen when the shot was fired, and cried out to a policeman, "Secure him!" which was done. The report, he said, was sharp and loud; but he did not hear the whiz of a ball, in consequence of the noise made by the carriage. Colonel Wylde, another equerry, with several other witnesses, corroborated the testimony of Colonel Arbuthnot; and it appeared that Francis had on the previous day pointed a pistol at the Queen, though he did not fire. On the defence it was alleged that the attempt was the result of distress, and that the prisoner had no design to injure the Queen. The jury retired, and in about half an hour returned into court with a verdict of "Guilty," finding that the pistol was loaded with some destructive substance, besides the wadding and powder. Chief Justice Tyndal immediately pronounced sentence of death for high treason, that he should be hanged, beheaded, and divided into four quarters. At the conclusion of the sentence the prisoner fainted, and fell into the arms of the gaolers. The sentence was not executed. It was commuted to transportation for life.

Even this example was not sufficient to protect Her Majesty from the criminal attempts of miscreants of this class. Another was made on the 3rd of July following, as the Queen was going from Buckingham Palace to the Chapel Royal, accompanied by Prince Albert and the

King of the Belgians. In the Mall, about half way between the palace and the stable-yard gate, a deformed youth was seen to present a pistol at the Queen's carriage by a person named Bassett, who seized him and brought him to the police; but they refused to take him in charge, treating the matter as a hoax. Bassett himself was subsequently arrested, and examined by the Privy Council. When the facts of the case were ascertained, the police hastened to repair the error of the morning, and sent to all the police-stations a description of the real offender. He was sixteen years of age, five feet six inches high, with a humpback, short neck, light hair, a long, sickly, pale face, his nose marked with a scar, or black patch, and his appearance altogether dirty. This tallied exactly with the description which a working jeweller named Bean had given to the police of his son, who had absconded a week or a fortnight before. This led to the apprehension of the lad, who was identified, examined, and committed to prison. His trial took place on the 25th of August, at the Central Criminal Court. The Attorney-General briefly related the facts of the case, and Lord Abinger, the presiding judge, having summed up, the jury returned a verdict of "Guilty," convicting the prisoner of presenting a pistol, loaded with powder and wadding, "in contempt of the Queen, and to the terror of divers liege subjects." The sentence of the court was—"Imprisonment in Millbank Penitentiary for eighteen calendar months."

The repetition of these infamous outrages excited great public indignation, and led to a general demand that something effectual should be done to put a stop to them by rendering the law more prompt and effective, and the punishment more disgraceful. In compliance with this demand, Sir Robert Peel brought in a bill upon the subject, which was unanimously accepted by both Houses, and which rapidly passed into law.

The state of the law relating to attacks upon the Sovereign in former times was calculated to stimulate the morbid vanity and love of notoriety which prompted persons of weak minds to the commission of such crimes. Trials for high treason, even where the object was not to take away the life of the Sovereign, or to change the form of Government, were surrounded with forms and solemnities that encumbered the proceedings and elevated the prisoner into a sort of hero, making him the centre of public interest, and the universal topic of conversation—just the thing he desired, while double the amount of evidence was required to secure a conviction than would be necessary in any other case. In the year 1800, after the attempt of Hatfield on the life of George III., an act was passed which, in cases of actual attacks upon the life of the Sovereign, abolished those encumbering forms and solemnities. Sir Robert Peel in his bill proposed to extend the provisions of that act to cases where the object was not compassing the life, but "compassing the wounding of the Sovereign." "I propose," he said, "that, after the passing of this act, if any person or persons shall wilfully discharge or attempt to discharge, or point, aim, or present at or near the person of the Queen any gun, pistol, or other description of fire-arms

whatsoever, although the same shall not contain explosive or destructive substance or material, or shall discharge or attempt to discharge any explosive or destructive substance or material, or if any person shall strike, or attempt to strike the person of the Queen, with any offensive weapons, or in any manner whatever; or, if any persons shall throw or attempt to throw any substance whatever at or on the person of the Queen, with intent in any of the cases aforesaid to break the public peace, or to excite the alarm of the Queen," &c., that the punishment in all such cases should be the same as that in cases of larceny—namely, transportation for a term not exceeding seven years. But a more effective punishment was added, namely, public whipping, concerning which Sir Robert Peel remarked, "I think this punishment will make known to the miscreants capable of harbouring such designs, that, instead of exciting misplaced and stupid sympathy, their base and malignant motives in depriving Her Majesty of that relaxation which she must naturally need after the cares and public anxieties of her station, will lead to a punishment proportioned to their detestable acts. What they had to guard against was not any traitorous attempt against the peace of the nation, by conspiring to take away the life of the Sovereign, but the folly or malignity of wretches guilty of acts prompted by motives which were scarcely assignable. The law, in its charity to human nature, he said, had omitted to provide for the case of any being formed like a man who could find satisfaction in firing a pistol at a young lady, that lady a mother, and that mother the Queen of these realms. It never entered into the conception of former law-makers, that anything so monstrous would arise, as that the Queen would not enjoy a degree of liberty granted to the meanest of her subjects."

These sentiments were received with loud and protracted cheering from both sides of the House. Lord John Russell, Mr. Hume, Mr. O'Connell, and others expressed their cordial concurrence. The bill was received in the Upper House with equal unanimity. It has effectually answered its purpose, as no offence of the kind has since occurred, excepting the act of a lunatic, who about ten years ago struck Her Majesty with a cane, and who escaped a public whipping out of regard to the feelings of his family and connections, who were highly respectable.

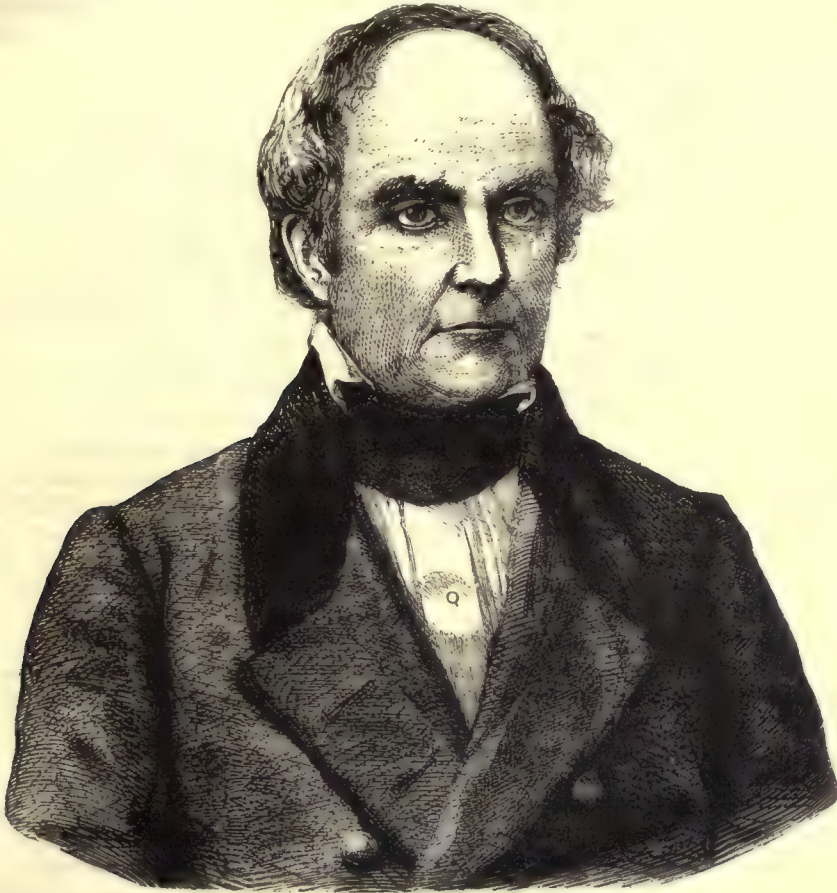
Serious differences between England and the United States of America occupied the attention of both Governments during the years 1841 and 1842, and were brought to a satisfactory termination by the Ashburton treaty, referred to in the royal speech at the opening of Parliament in 1843. The questions at issue, which were keenly debated on both sides, related to the right of search and the Oregon boundary. The Government of Great Britain regarding the slave-trade as an enormous evil and a scandal to the civilised world, entered into arrangements with other nations for its suppression. For that purpose treaties were concluded, securing to each of the contracting parties the mutual right of search under certain limitations. The United States

Government declined to be a party to these treaties, and refused to have their vessels searched or interfered with in time of peace upon the high seas under any pretence whatever. Notwithstanding these treaties, however, and the costly measures which England had recourse to for suppressing the nefarious traffic in human beings, the slave trade was carried on even by some of the nations that had agreed to the treaties; and in order to do this more effectually they adopted the flag of the United States. For the purpose of preventing this abuse, England claimed the right of search or of visitation to ascertain the national character of the vessels navigating the African Seas, and detaining their papers to see if they were legally provided with documents entitling them to the protection of any country, and especially the country whose flag they might have hoisted at the time. Lord Palmerston, as Foreign Secretary, argued that while his Government did not claim the right to search American merchantmen in times of peace, a merchantman could not exempt itself from search by merely hoisting a piece of bunting with the United States emblems and colours upon it. It should be shown by the papers that the vessel was entitled to bear the flag—that she was United States property, and navigated according to law. Mr. Stevenson, the American Minister, protested strongly against this doctrine, denying that there was any ground of public right or justice in the claim put forth, since the right of search was, according to the law of nations, a strictly belligerent right. If other nations sought to cover their infamous traffic by the fraudulent use of the American flag, the Government of the United States was not responsible; and in any case it was for that Government to take such steps as might be required to protect its flag from abuse. Lord Aberdeen, who succeeded Lord Palmerston in the Foreign Office, demonstrated the futility of any such remedy for the evil. The suspected vessels were not visited as American, but as piratical outlaws, possessing no claim to any flag or nationality whatever; yet, if they were found avowedly engaged in the slave trade, exhibiting the manacles, fetters, and other implements of torture, or had even a number of slaves on board, no British officers could interfere further, according to the American view of the question. He might give information to the cruisers of the United States, but it would not be in his power to arrest or impede the prosecution of the voyage, and the success of the undertaking. Unanswerable as these arguments undoubtedly are, they failed to convince the American Government, whose minister rejoined at great length, and came to the conclusion that if a power such as that asserted by Her Majesty's Government should be enforced, not only without consent, but in the face of a direct refusal to concede it, it could be regarded in no other light than a violation of national rights and sovereignty, and the incontestable principles of international law, leading, therefore, to consequences of a painful character, and deeply endangering the good understanding between the two countries.

Such being the state of our relations with America,

and other sources of irritation having arisen between the two Cabinets, Sir Robert Peel's Government determined to send to Washington a special ambassador, who should be clothed with full powers to effect an amicable adjustment of all the causes of dispute. The gentleman selected for this purpose was Lord Ashburton. A more judicious selection could not have been made. Mr. William Bingham Baring, who had been raised to the peerage in 1835, having been previously President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint, was known throughout the world as one of our merchant princes, and was the son of an American lady, the daughter of

take place in London within six months of that date. By that treaty the line of the north-western boundary was settled. It was stipulated that Great Britain and America should each maintain a sufficient squadron or naval force, carrying not less than eighty guns, for the purpose of enforcing, separately and respectively, the laws, rights, and obligations of each of the two countries for the suppression of the slave trade, and to use their joint influence for suppressing the slave markets. They also provided for the mutual delivery to justice of all persons charged with murder, or assault with intent to murder, or with piracy, robbery, forgery, and arson



DANIEL WEBSTER.

Mr. William Bingham, of Philadelphia, a senator of the United States. This connection with America, coupled with his intimate knowledge of all commercial, financial, and international questions, as well as his high personal character, pointed him out as pre-eminently fitted for such a mission. The hopes which his mission excited were not disappointed. He sailed from England in February, 1842, and after a tedious and stormy passage, arrived at New York on the 1st of April. He immediately entered upon negotiations with Mr. Webster. They continued till the month of August, when a treaty was agreed upon and signed at Washington by the two plenipotentiaries, the mutual exchange of ratifications to

committed within the jurisdiction of either country, should they be found within the territories of the other; but the evidence of criminality should be sufficient to warrant the committal for trial of the fugitive according to the laws of the country in which he was apprehended.

Lord Ashburton succeeded remarkably well in conciliating the Americans. On his departure he was entertained at a public banquet in New York, when the most cordial feelings towards this country were expressed by the Americans who were present. Lord Ashburton's speech on that occasion will be read with interest. He said: "I cannot but regard it as somewhat singular and auspicious, that the respectable gentleman who presides at this hospitable

board should happen to be the immediate descendant of a man whose name will live in your memories so long as honour, patriotism, and virtue are venerated—I mean, the late Mr. Jay. That illustrious man stepped forward on an occasion somewhat similar to that which you now celebrate; and having visited England, happily succeeded in his errand of peace, although made under circumstances of a far more difficult nature than those which surrounded me on a mission which has had a like fortunate termination. The task imposed on Mr. Jay was indeed an arduous one. At that period wild passions were at work, and the voice of the messenger of peace could only with difficulty be heard. But amid all those trying circumstances, that great man and those who supported him did maintain the independence of this country, and saved both nations from a most serious war at that time, whilst war was raging amongst the nations of the earth; and undoubtedly he laid the foundation of great commercial prosperity. Fortunately, gentlemen, I have had much less difficulty to encounter; for when I add to the reception I met with at Washington from the President, from his Cabinet, from the Senate and House of Representatives, that cordial welcome which I received at Boston, the cradle of American liberty and independence; and also the reception with which I have been greeted here, as well as in your City Hall, where I have been told that I shook hands with upwards of 3,000 persons collected there by one common impulse—at this festive board, around which I see such a large number of your most respectable citizens, I naturally ask, Where is the danger of war between England and America? Whatever may be hidden, I do not pretend to scan; but of a verity I can say that I have seen nothing but the greatest and most unaffected cordiality, and good-will, and friendship. Still, although my mission has been made under peculiarly happy circumstances, I trust that I shall not be charged with vanity in saying that I, too, have done the State some service."

The object of Lord Ashburton's mission was referred to in the Queen's speech at the opening of the Session of 1843, in the following terms:—"By the treaty which Her Majesty has concluded with the United States of America, and by the adjustment of those differences which, from their long continuance, had endangered the preservation of peace, Her Majesty trusts that the amicable relations of the two countries have been confirmed." In the debate on the address, Lord Brougham said he shared with all his countrymen whose opinion was worth having, in thanking, from the bottom of his heart, his noble friend Lord Ashburton, for the skill, the tempered firmness, and conciliation with which—partly from his own intrinsic qualities, and partly from accidental circumstances connecting him with the people of the United States, in such a way that he alone of all Her Majesty's subjects could have effected it—he had brought that negotiation to its present close, by which he not only gave peace, but restored cordial good understanding, and brought back the feeling of mutual good will that had unhappily been so long dis-

turbed. In the House of Commons similar feelings were expressed as to the result of Lord Ashburton's mission. "I could have shown," said Sir Robert Peel, "if the policy of that noble lord had been called in question in this House, as it has been out of doors, that the treaty which was effected by him affords to the country everything which can be considered essential to the security of our North American possessions—not, perhaps, as much as we were justly entitled to, and had a right to expect, but, considering the uncertainty attached to the interpretation of the old treaty, considering the great length of time which has since elapsed, taking into account that the geography of the country was in a great degree unknown at the time of first assigning the boundaries, we should feel satisfied to accept such a division of the disputed district as secures our possessions in North America, and at the same time preserves our military communication intact." With regard to the dissatisfaction expressed out of doors, he remarked that Mr. Webster had been assailed in the United States just as Lord Ashburton had been here, with taunts that he had abandoned the interests of his country; and Mr. Webster admitted, in a letter to Mr. Everett, then Minister for the United States at the British Court, that Lord Ashburton had made no concession whatever on the subject of the right of search.

Great discredit, however, was brought upon the United States at this time by the repudiation of their debts, of which several of them had been guilty. One of the sufferers was the Rev. Sidney Smith, who avenged himself for his loss by the sarcasm and ridicule with which he assailed the unprincipled defaulters. In April, 1843, a petition from him was presented to Congress, containing an admirable statement of the case, which deserves to be transmitted to posterity, as an extremely interesting historical document:—"The humble petition of the Rev. Sidney Smith, to the House of Congress, at Washington. I petition your honourable House to institute some measures for the restoration of American credit, and for the repayment of debts incurred and repudiated by several of the States. Your petitioner lent to the state of Pennsylvania a sum of money, for the purpose of some public improvement. The amount, though small, is to him important, and is a saving from a life income, made with difficulty and privation. If their refusal to pay (from which a very large number of English families are suffering) had been the result of war produced by the unjust aggressions of powerful enemies—if it had arisen from civil discord—if it had proceeded from an improvident application of means in the first years of self-government—if it were the act of a poor state struggling against the barrenness of Nature, every friend of America would have been contented to wait for better times; but the fraud is committed in the profound peace of Pennsylvania, by the richest state in the Union, after the wise investment of borrowed money in roads and canals, of which the repudiators are every day reaping the advantage. It is an act of bad faith, which, all its circumstances considered, has no parallel and no excuse. Nor is it only the loss of property which

your petitioner laments: he laments still more that immense power which the bad faith of America has given to aristocratical opinions, and to the enemies of free institutions in the Old World. It is in vain any longer to appeal to history, and to point out the wrongs which the many have received from the few. The Americans, who boast to have improved the institutions of the Old World, have at least equalled its crimes. A great nation, after trampling under foot all earthly tyranny, has been guilty of a fraud as enormous as ever disgraced the worst king of the most degraded nation of Europe. It is most painful to your petitioner to see that American citizens excite, wherever they may go, the recollection that they belong to a dishonest people; who pride themselves on having tricked and having pillaged Europe; and this mark is fixed, by their faithless legislators, on some of the best and most honourable men in the world, whom every Englishman has been eager to see and proud to receive. It is a subject of serious concern to your petitioner that you are losing all that power which the friends of freedom rejoiced that you possessed, looking upon you as the ark of human happiness, and the most splendid picture of justice and wisdom that the world had yet seen. Little did the friends of America expect it, and sad is the spectacle to see you rejected by every State in Europe, as a nation with whom no contract can be made, because none will be kept; unstable in the very foundations of social life, deficient in the elements of good faith; men who prefer any load of infamy, however great, to any pressure of taxation, however light. Nor is it only this gigantic bankruptcy, for so many degrees of longitude and latitude, which your petitioner deploras; but he is alarmed also by that total want of shame with which these things have been done—the callous immorality with which Europe has been plundered—that deadness of the moral sense which seems to preclude all return to honesty, to perpetuate this new infamy, and to threaten its extension over every State of the Union. To any man of real philanthropy, who receives pleasure from the improvements of the world, the repudiation of the public debts of America, and the shameless manner in which it has been talked of and done, is the most melancholy event which has happened during the existence of the present generation. Your petitioner sincerely prays that the great and good men still existing among you may, by teaching to the United States the deep disgrace they have incurred in the whole world, restore them to moral health, to that high position they have lost, and which, for the happiness of mankind, it is so important they should ever maintain; for the United States are now working out the greatest of all political problems, and upon that confederacy the eyes of thinking men are intensely fixed, to see how far the mass of mankind can be trusted with the management of their own affairs, the establishment of their own happiness.”

The American Minister, Mr. Everett, in reply to a memorial to the President from the holders of American stocks, wrote a letter explaining the position of the

repudiating States, and expressing sympathy with the sufferers. He protested against the doctrine that a State which had pledged its faith and resources could release itself from the obligation, however burdensome, in any way but that of honourable payment. Those States which had failed to make provisions for the interests due on their bonds, had done so under the pressure of adverse circumstances, “and not with the purpose of giving legislative sanction to a doctrine so pernicious, unworthy, and immoral.” But he believed that the number was exceedingly small of those who in any form advanced the idea of what has been called repudiation. They had involved themselves most unadvisedly in engagements which would be onerous to larger and richer communities, and they yet possessed, under an almost hopeless present embarrassment, the undoubted means of eventual recovery. For example, the State of Illinois had undertaken the construction of a ship canal, one hundred miles in length, to unite the waters of Lake Michigan with the Illinois river, and afterwards commenced the execution of 1,300 miles of railway, for which purpose it borrowed £2,000,000 sterling, though the population of the State was less than half a million, only equal to a second-rate English county. The state, indeed, was larger than England and Wales, and it possessed immense resources, being connected by the Mississippi with the Gulf of Mexico, and by Lake Michigan with the St. Lawrence, besides several navigable rivers. It was situated about the centre of a field of bituminous coal as large as Great Britain. Such a state, it was manifest, could not long bear the stigma of repudiation. The States themselves had suffered enormously by loss of credit, insomuch that the general government could not negotiate a trifling loan in this great metropolis of the commercial world. In addition to the public embarrassments, private fortunes, almost without number, had been destroyed in the general wreck. “I doubt,” says Mr. Everett, “if, in the history of the world, in so short a period, such a transition has been made from a high state of prosperity to one of general distress, as in the United States within the last six years. And yet, gentlemen, the elasticity and power of recovery in the country are great beyond the conception of those who do not know it from personal observation. Even within this disastrous period to which I have alluded, a private commercial debt to this country, estimated at £25,000,000, has been paid by the American merchants, with as little loss to the creditor as would attend the collection of an equal amount of domestic debt in this or any other country.”

Mr. Everett confessed that the reproach which repudiation had brought on the American name was the only circumstance that prevented a residence in the land of his fathers from being to him a source of unmingled satisfaction. He was not the only American statesman that burned with indignation at the conduct of the repudiating governments. Mr. Webster, at a meeting in New York, referred to Pennsylvania, the richest state on the face of the earth, excepting England, and he asked what could be the debt of a state like Penn-

sylvania, that she should not be able to pay it? The debt of Pennsylvania, the debt of Illinois, the debt of any state in the Union did not amount to a sixpence in comparison with the national debt of England. "Now, gentlemen," said Mr. Webster, "I belong to Massachusetts; but if I belonged to a deeply indebted state, I'd work these ten fingers to their stumps—I'd hold the plough, I'd drive the plough—I'd do both before it should be said of the state to which I belong that she did not pay her debts. That's the true principle; let us act upon it. Let us go with it to its full extent. If it costs us our comforts, let us sacrifice our comforts; if it costs us our farms, let us mortgage our farms. But don't let it be said by the proud capitalists of England, 'You don't pay your debts; you Republican governments don't pay your debts.' Let us say to them, 'We will pay them. We will pay them to the uttermost farthing.' I wish to breathe the breath of an independent man. A citizen of a proud and honoured country, I abhor the idea that my daily happiness is to be marred by the consciousness that anything disgraceful hangs on the country or any part of it. Let it never be said among the nations of Europe that the United States of America, the nation that had its birth in the glorious scenes of '76—the country of Washington, the example and great type of all modern republics—cannot, or will not pay its debts." These sentiments were received with long continued and deafening applause by the audience.

The war in Afghanistan was alluded to in the Royal speech, at the opening of the session of 1846, in terms of congratulation at the complete success that had attended the recent military operations in that country, owing to the high ability with which they had been directed, as well as the constancy and valour of the European and native forces, which had established, by decisive victories on the scenes of former disasters, the superiority of Her Majesty's arms, and had effected the liberation of the British subjects that had been held in captivity. This, therefore, is the proper time to relate briefly the incidents of that war, some of which were full of romantic interest. About the year 1837 the attention of the British Government in India was attracted by the conduct of certain supposed agents of Russia, in the countries to the west of the Indus. In order to counteract their designs, it was thought desirable to establish an alliance with the rulers of Afghanistan. With this view, overtures were made to Dost Mahomed Khan, then chief of Caubul. These having failed, the British Government sought to establish a friendly power in Afghanistan, by aiding the exiled prince, Shah Soojah, in another attempt to regain his throne. The chief of Caubul had an army of 14,000 men, including 6,000 cavalry, with 40 field-pieces. His brothers held Kandahar and the surrounding country, with a military force of 4,000 men and 50 guns. The British force assembled to support the claims of his opponent amounted to 28,000 men, aided by a contingent force of 6,000 Sikhs, furnished by the ruler of the Punjaub, and about 5,000 troops raised by the Shah's eldest son. This combined force was called "the army of the Indus." Under

the chief command of Sir John Keane, it advanced to the town of Dadar, and thence to Kandahar, which was occupied without opposition; and there, on the 8th of May, 1839, Shah Soojah was solemnly enthroned. After this the march was resumed towards Caubul. The fortress of Ghugnee, believed by the Afghans to be impregnable, was blown up and taken by storm. The invading army reached Caubul, and on the 7th of August the restored sovereign made his public entry into his capital. Having thus accomplished its mission, the army of the Indus returned home, leaving behind a detachment of 8,000 men. For two years Shah Soojah and his allies remained in possession of Caubul and Kandahar, Dost Mahomed having surrendered himself prisoner. But the attempts to reduce the other chiefs to subjection were unsuccessful. They had been gathering their forces and maturing their plans till the 2nd of November, 1841, when a terrible outbreak occurred in Caubul. Sir Alexander Burnes and several other British officers were massacred. In a conference between Sir William McNaughten and Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mahomed, the British representatives and a number of officers were treacherously murdered. In January following, in pursuance of a convention, the British evacuated Afghanistan. In the course of their winter march, over an elevated and bleak tract of country, the miserable remnant of the British army, destitute and dispirited, were exposed to continual attacks from the pursuing enemy. Out of 4,500 soldiers, with a host of camp-followers, only one European, Dr. Bryden, succeeded in reaching Jellalabad. Ghugnee was surrendered to the enemy by the British garrison, but General Nott kept possession of Kandahar, and Colonel Sale maintained his position at Jellalabad. To avenge these disasters, and rescue the prisoners who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, preparations on a large scale were made in India. An army of 12,000 men assembled in the Punjaub, under General Pollok.

An unfortunate collision with the tribes of Ghilzyes formed a painful episode in the Afghan war. The Caubul Pass is a long defile, through which the road runs from Caubul to Jellalabad, and which it was therefore necessary to keep open for the purpose of safe intercourse between Caubul and British India. The Indian Government thought that the most desirable mode of effecting this object was to pay the Ghilzye chiefs a yearly sum from the Caubul treasury, in order that our troops might not be molested. But, owing to some neglect or mismanagement, the money was not paid; the chiefs, therefore, felt that the British had been guilty of a deliberate breach of faith. They were exasperated, assumed a hostile attitude, and cut off all communication with British India. It therefore became necessary to force the Pass, for which purpose Major-General Sir Robert Sale was sent by General Elphinstone from Caubul, with a brigade of light infantry. On the 12th of October they entered the Pass, near the middle of which the enemy were found posted behind precipitate ridges of the mountains on either side, from which they opened a well-directed fire. General Sale was hit with a ball above the ankle, and compelled to retire and give the command

to Colonel Dennis. The pass was gallantly cleared, but with severe fighting and heavy loss. After this was accomplished the force had still to fight its way through a difficult country, occupied by an active enemy, for eighteen days. All the commanding points of the hills were in possession of the Ghilzies, where they were protected by breastworks; and though they had been from time to time outflanked and routed, when the march was resumed, and the cumbrous train of baggage filed over the mountains, the enemy again appeared from beyond the most distant ridges, renewing the contest with increased numbers and the most savage fury. Since leaving Caubul our troops had been kept constantly on the alert by attacks night and day. Their positions had been secured only by unremitting labour, throwing up entrenchments, and very severe outpost duty. The enemy were eminently skilful at the species of warfare to which their attempts had been confined, armed with weapons which enabled them to annoy the invaders from a distance at which they could be reached only by our artillery. The brigade reached Jellalabad on the 12th of November.

The force left behind to keep possession of Caubul and guard the *protégé* of the Indian Government, was so situated as to tempt the aggression of a treacherous enemy. Sir William McNaughten, the British Minister, and his suite, resided in the "Mission Compound," which was badly defended, and commanded by a number of small forts, while the commissariat stores were placed in an old fort, detached from the cantonment, and in such a state as to be wholly indefensible. A conspiracy had been formed by the friends of Akbar Khan, son of the deposed sovereign, Dost Mahomed, who forged a document, and had it circulated amongst the principal men of Caubul, to the effect that it was the design of the British envoy to send them all to London, and that the king had issued an order to put the infidels all to death. The insurrection commenced by an attack on the dwellings of Sir Alexander Burnes and Captain Johnson, who resided in the city. Sir Alexander addressed the party from the gallery of his house, thinking that it was a mere riot. The insurgents, however, broke in, killed him with his brother, Lieutenant Burnes, and Lieutenant Broadfoot, and set the house on fire. The Afghans then surrounded the cantonments, and poured in a constant fire upon them from every position they could occupy. They quickly seized the ill-defended commissariat stores, upon which the existence of the British depended. The garrison bravely defended itself with such precarious supplies as could be had from the country; but at length these supplies were exhausted. Winter set in, snow fell, and there was nothing before them but the prospect of starvation. They therefore listened to overtures for negotiation, and the British envoy was compelled to consent to the following humiliating terms:—That the British should evacuate the whole of Afghanistan, including Kandahar, Ghugnee, and Jellalabad; that they should be permitted to return unmolested to India, and have supplies granted to them on their road thither; that means of transport should be furnished to the troops; that

Dost Mahomed Khan, his family, and every Afghan then detained within our territories should be allowed to return to their own country; that Shah Soojah and his family should receive from the Afghan Government one lac of rupees per annum; that all prisoners should be released; that a general amnesty should be proclaimed; and that no British force should ever be sent into Afghanistan without being invited by the Afghan Government. These terms having been agreed to, the chiefs took with them Captain Trevor as a hostage; but nothing was done to carry the agreement into effect, and it soon became evident that the object was to starve out the garrison, and compel them to surrender unconditionally. At length, on the 22nd of December, they sent two persons into the cantonment, who made a proposal in the name of Akbar Khan, that the Shah should continue king, that Akbar should become his prime minister, and that one of the principal chiefs should be delivered up to the British as a prisoner. This was a mere trap, into which Sir William McNaughten unfortunately fell with fatal credulity. On the 23rd of December the envoy, attended by Captains Lawrence, Trevor, and M'Kenzie, left the "Mission Compound," to hold a conference with Akbar Khan in the plain towards Serah Sung. Crowds of armed Afghans hovering near soon excited suspicions of treachery. Captain Lawrence begged that the armed men might be ordered off; but Akbar Khan exclaimed, "No, they are all in the secret." At that instant Sir William and the three officers were seized from behind and disarmed. Sir W. McNaughten was last seen on the ground struggling violently with Akbar Khan, consternation and terror depicted on his countenance. "His look of wondering horror," says Mr. Kaye, "will never be forgotten by those who saw it, to their dying day. The only words he was heard to utter were, '*Ag baras Khoda!*' (For God's sake!) They were, perhaps, the last words spoken by one of the bravest gentlemen that ever fell a sacrifice to his erring faith in others. He had struggled from the first manfully against his doom, and now these last manful struggles cost the poor chief his life. Exasperated beyond all control by the resistance of his victim, whom he designed only to seize, Akbar Khan drew a pistol from his girdle—one of those pistols for the gift of which, only a little while before, he had profusely thanked the envoy—and shot McNaughten through the body. Whatever may be the judgment of posterity on other phases of his character, and other incidents of his career, the historian will ever dwell with pride upon the unfailing courage and constancy of the man who, with everything to discourage and depress him, surrounded by all enervating influences, was ever eager to counsel the nobler and the manlier course, ever ready to bear the burdens of responsibility, and face the assaults of danger. There was but one civilian at Caubul, and he was the truest soldier in the camp. He was an accomplished Oriental scholar, a good judicial officer, an apt secretary, and a kind-hearted man; but it is denied that, in any enlarged acceptance of the word, he is entitled to be called a statesman." *

* "History of the War in Afghanistan," vol. ii., pp. 306—8.

The other three officers were placed on horses, each behind a Ghilzye chief, who galloped off with them to a fort in the neighbourhood. Captain Trevor fell on his horse and was instantly murdered. The others were assailed with knives by the infuriated Afghans, and barely escaped to the fort with their lives. Meantime the head of the British Minister was cut off and paraded through the streets, while the bleeding and mangled trunk was exposed to the insults of the populace in the principal bazaar.

Notwithstanding all this treachery and barbarity, General Elphinstone, feeling his situation desperate, was weak enough to trust the Afghan chiefs, and to enter into a convention with them, in the hope of saving the garrison from destruction. The negotiations were carried on by Major Pottinger, and it was agreed that the former treaty should remain in force, with the following additional terms:—That the British should leave behind all their guns excepting six; that they should immediately give up all their treasures; and that hostages should be exchanged for married men with their wives and families. To this, however, the married men refused to consent, and it was not insisted on.

In pursuance of this convention the garrison retired, and commenced their fatal march on the 6th of January, 1842. The army consisted of 4,500 fighting men, with 12,000 camp followers, besides women and children. The snow lay deep upon the ground; they had scarcely commenced their march when they were attacked by the Afghans, the guns were captured, and they were obliged to fight their way, sword in hand, defending the women and children as well as they could. During the whole way through the snow, the road was strewn with bodies and stained with blood. The dead and dying were immediately stripped naked by the enemy, and their corpses hacked to pieces with long knives. During all this time the perfidious Akbar Khan sent messages, professing his regret at not being able to restrain the Ghilzye tribe; and after they had got through the pass, he made a proposal, which was accepted, to take the ladies under his protection. Accordingly, Lady Sale and Lady McNaughten, with six others, accompanied by their husbands, were left under his charge. The British troops then halted for a day, bivouacking on the snow. The cold was so intense that the Sepoys became benumbed and paralysed, in which state the whole of them were next day attacked and cut to pieces. The Europeans managed to hold together, but when they arrived at Jugdulluck, thirty-five miles distant from Caubul, only 300 out of 16,500 persons who left that city remained alive. At this place a halt was ordered, and through the interference of Akbar Khan, the miserable remnant were permitted to occupy a ruined enclosure, where, worn out by fatigue and utterly helpless, they lay down to rest in the snow. General Elphinstone was detained a prisoner by Akbar Khan in a small fort, whence he dispatched a note to Brigadier Ankitel, advising him to march that night, as there was treachery a-foot. The wearied band, aroused from their slumbers, accordingly moved on in the dark; but their departure was noticed, they were

attacked in the rear, they broke into disorder, threatened to shoot their officers, separated in small parties, and thus, scattered and confused, they were cut down almost to a man. Of the officers, however, a considerable number escaped on horseback; but they, too, were attacked wherever they appeared, until, as we have already mentioned, only one gentleman, Dr. Bryden, survived to tell the dreadful story, reaching Jellalabad on the 13th of January. It afterwards transpired, however, that several other officers were detained in captivity.

So perished the last remnant of the army of the Indus. Mr. Kaye has the following reflections upon this retreat, one of the most disastrous recorded in history:—"It was not a human enemy alone with which those miserable men had to contend. It was theirs to war against a climate more perilous in its hostility than the inexorable foe. But neither the cruel cold, nor the malignant Afghans would have consigned the British army to destruction, if the curse which had so long brooded over the councils of our military chiefs, and turned everything into folly and imbecility, had not followed them on their exit from the Caubul cantonments, and crowned the catalogue of disaster and disgrace. It is probable that, if greater energy had been exhibited at the commencement of the retreat—if nothing had been thought of but the best means of accomplishing the march through the snow with the utmost possible rapidity—a large portion of the force would have been saved. But the delays which were suffered to arise at the commencement of the retreat sealed the fate of the army. They threw the game into the hands of the enemy. We waited, indeed, whilst the gates were being closed upon us, and then there was no outlet of escape. Whilst our wretched people were halting and perishing in the snow, the enemy were gathering in advance of them, and lining the passes, intent on their destruction. The events of that miserable week in January afforded a fitting climax to the series of disasters which had darkened the two preceding months. There is nothing, indeed, more remarkable in the history of the world than the awful completeness, the sublime unity, of this Caubul tragedy."*

Lord Auckland was then Governor-General of India, but the period of his tenure of office was drawing to a close. He hoped it would end brightly, that the war for the restoration of an imbecile and puppet king would have ended triumphantly, and that he would return to his native land bearing something of the reflected glory of the conquerors of Afghanistan. He had been cheered by the dispatches of the too sanguine envoy in the month of October, who spoke only of the continued tranquillity of Caubul. November passed, however, without any intelligence, and all was anxiety and painful suspense. Intelligence at last came confirming the worst anticipations. Calcutta was astounded at the news that Afghanistan, believed to be prosperous and grateful for British intervention, was in arms against its deliverers. Suddenly the tranquillity of that doomed country was found to be a delusion. "Across the whole length and breadth of the land the history of that

* "History of the War in Afghanistan," vol. II., p. 889.

gigantic lie was written in characters of blood." Confounded and paralysed by the tidings of so great a failure, which he had not energy to retrieve, he thought only of abandoning the vicious policy of aggression which had ended so miserably, and given such a terrible blow to the *prestige* of British power in India, on which our dominion in the East so much depended. He had owed his appointment to the Whigs; and the Conservatives, who were now in office, had opposed the policy of the Government regarding the Afghan war. But no one seemed more sick of the policy of aggression than the Governor-General himself. He became

and that their worst forebodings had been realised, his spirit seems to have been completely broken; instead of any attempt at retrieving the misfortunes of his Government, he thought only of saving, if possible, what remained of the forces that he had sent across the Indus. Writing to the Commander-in-chief, Sir Jasper Nicolls, who was then on a tour through the Upper Provinces of India, with reference to the sending forward of reinforcements, he said he did not see how the sending forward of a brigade could by possibility have any influence on the events which it was supposed were then passing at Caubul, which they could not reach



SIR ROBERT SALE.

thoroughly convinced of the folly of placing a detached force in a distant city, which could be reached only through dangerous defiles, occupied by an ever-watchful enemy, depending for supplies upon uncertain allies, and without any basis of operations. The expedition had proved enormously expensive, and had drained the Indian treasury of funds which should have been employed in developing the resources of our Indian possessions. When all this had ended in disastrous failure and national disgrace—when he recollected that the directors of the Company, as well as the Government, had expressed intense dissatisfaction at his policy, feeling conscious that their complaints were just,

before April. In his opinion they were not to think of marching fresh armies to the re-conquest of that which they were likely to lose. He feared that safety to the force at Caubul could only come from itself. Writing to Sir W. McNaghten, he said, "I would have you share in the feeling which is growing strongly upon me, that the maintenance of the position which we have attempted to establish in Afghanistan is no longer to be looked for. It will be for you and for this Government to consider in what manner all that belongs to India can be most immediately and most honourably withdrawn from the country." The Commander-in-chief himself had been always of opinion that the renewed efforts of the Govern-

ment to support Shah Soojah on his throne, and to establish a permanent influence in Afghanistan, was a great mistake. However, owing to the energy of Mr. George Clarke, the Governor-General's agent on the north-west frontier, and his assistant, Captain, afterwards Sir Henry Lawrence, forces were dispatched from that quarter, under the command of General Pollock, who had commanded the garrison of Agra, having been in the Indian service since 1803, and having distinguished himself under General Lake. This appointment gave the greatest satisfaction, as it was believed that he was selected solely for his merit, and not through aristocratic influence. It was certainly one of the best appointments that could have been made, as no officer in India possessed in a higher degree the qualifications necessary for the command of the expedition at a moment so critical, when our power in India was in jeopardy, and a further continuance of disaster might have too severely tried the fidelity of our native troops on this side of the Indus.

CHAPTER LVI.

Lord Ellenborough appointed Governor-General in the room of Lord Auckland—The Garrison of Peshawur—Occupation and abandonment of the Khybur Pass—Arrival of General Pollock at Peshawur—Demoralised State of the Troops—The Garrison at Jellalabad—Its Difficulties—Holds a Council of War—Proposals to Surrender Resisted by Colonel Broadfoot—The Defences—Destructive Earthquake—Restoration of the Fortifications—Advance of General Pollock to the Relief of the Garrison—The Khybur Pass forced—Destruction of the Afghan Camp by the Garrison at Jellalabad, and utter Rout of Besiegers—Votes of Thanks to the Army by both Houses of Parliament—Proclamation of Lord Ellenborough—His Efforts to save India—The English Prisoners—Measures taken for their recovery by Sir Robert Sale—Sufferings of the Captives—They agree to purchase their own Ransom—The Bond—Glad Tidings—Arrival of Sir Robert Sale and his Column of Liberators—Joyful Congratulations—Submission of the Hostile Chiefs—Measures of Retribution—Capture of Istaliff, containing the Afghan Women and Treasures—Punishment inflicted on Caubul—Proclamation of Lord Ellenborough reversing our Indian Policy—Restoration of the Gates of Somnauth—Absurd and Mischievous Proclamation of the Governor-General.

THE indignation which had been excited in India by the horrifying accounts of the destruction of the army in its retreat from Caubul, and the atrocities that had been perpetrated by the enemy, caused the public to lose all patience with the feebleness and supineness of Lord Auckland, who proved altogether unequal to the emergency. It was therefore a great relief when the mail arrived announcing the appointment of the Earl of Ellenborough to take his place. The appointment was hailed with the greatest satisfaction alike by Whig and Tory. He was elected in October, 1841, and attended the usual complimentary dinner given by the directors on such occasions. When returning thanks for the drinking of his health, he expressed his determination, on assuming the reins of government, to direct all the energies of his mind to the cultivation of the arts of peace, to emulate the magnificent beneficence of the Mahomedan conquerors, and "to elevate and improve the condition of the generous and mighty people of India."

Meanwhile Brigadier Wild occupied a position of

great difficulty at Peshawur. He had four native infantry regiments, containing a large number of young soldiers, whom the mutinous Sikhs had impressed with a great horror of the Khybur Pass. The only cavalry he had was a troop of irregular horse, and the only guns, four pieces of Sikh artillery. Besides, the owners of the camels, which had been hired at Ferozepore to proceed as far as Jellalabad, refused to advance further than Peshawur. It was under these circumstances that Sale and M'Gregor earnestly urged the advance of the brigade for the relief of that place. The fortress of Ali Musjid, regarded as the key to the Khybur Pass, is situated about twenty-five miles from Peshawur: and as it lay between the two positions of Sale and Wild, it was of the utmost importance that it should be occupied. It was accordingly resolved that one-half of Wild's brigade should be dispatched for this service. On the 15th of January, Colonel Moseley, with the 53rd and 64th Sepoy Regiments, started under cover of the night, and reached their destination early in the morning. The fortress was about five miles up the Pass. Soon after they had taken up their position, they discovered to their dismay, that owing to some mistake, instead of 350 supply bullocks, which had been ordered, only fifty or sixty had arrived. Here, then, were two regiments shut up in an isolated fortress without provisions. Day after day passed and no succour came. Wild made an effort to send forward supplies, but the attempt was a disastrous failure. The Sikh auxiliaries mutinied to a man, and refused to enter the Pass. The misconduct of the Sikhs, wrote Captain Lawrence, was rendered more atrocious, and our own mortification more bitter by the circumstance that a lac and a half of rupees had been advanced to the Sikh authorities for the payment of those men.

"We have been disgracefully beaten back," he said. "Both our large guns broke down: one was on an elephant; it was taken down to be put together when the other failed; but its carriage breaking too, the sepoys lost all heart, and I grieve to say that I could not get men to bring one off, though I tried for an hour, and at last, finding we were only expending ammunition, we left it in their hands, but it was broken completely down and spiked." The column fell back on Jum road, and the garrison of Ali Musjid was so far left to its fate. Its condition was most deplorable. The sepoys were put on half rations, but in a few days the supplies were nearly exhausted. With unwholesome water, without tents or bedding under a severe climate, and surrounded by depressing influences of all sorts, the health of the men gave way. There being no prospect of relief, Colonel Moseley determined to evacuate the fortress. Captain Burt and Captain Thomas offered to remain and keep possession of so important a position, if only 150 men would volunteer for the service. But none were found willing to undertake the perilous duty, and so Ali Musjid was abandoned, and suffered to fall into the hands of the Afreedis. The brigade had some fighting on its way back. Some of its officers were killed, some wounded and sick abandoned, and some baggage lost. But when they had arrived Captain Lawrence wrote to

Mr. G. Clarke, "The regiments are safe through. Thank God."

On the 5th of February General Pollock reached Peshawur, and found the troops under Brigadier Wild for the most part sick and disorganised. His first care was to restore the *morale* of the troops. Even the officers had yielded to an unworthy panic. Some of them openly declared against another attempt to force the Khybur Pass, and one said he would do his best to dissuade every sepoy of his corps from entering it again. Owing to this state of things, Pollock was compelled to remain inactive through the months of February and March, though the eyes of all India were turned upon him, and the most urgent letters reached him from Sale and M'Gregor to hasten to their relief. But the general was resolved not to risk another failure, and his duty was to wait patiently till the health, spirits, and discipline of the troops were restored, and until fresh regiments arrived. No wonder that pressing entreaties for succour came from Jellalabad. The garrison had exerted themselves with the utmost diligence to fortify the place, which they expected soon to be invested by hosts of Afghans, flushed with victory and thirsting for blood and plunder. The camp followers were organised to assist in manning the walls, and foraging parties were sent out with good effect, while there was yet time to get in provisions. In the meanwhile Sale received a letter from the Shah, demanding what were his intentions, as his people had concluded a treaty with the Afghans, consenting to leave the country. There was an army preparing for their expulsion, and there were many of their countrymen and countrywomen hostages in the hands of a fanatical and vindictive enemy, while there was little prospect of any immediate relief from the Indian Government. There was even a feeling that they had been abandoned by the Government at Calcutta, which did not wish to maintain the supremacy of the British arms in Afghanistan. A council of war was called on the 26th of January; a stormy debate ensued; the majority were for coming to terms with the enemy and withdrawing from the country, for which purpose the draft of a letter in reply to the king was prepared. For two days its terms were debated, the proposition to surrender being vehemently resisted by an officer named Broadfoot, who declared it impossible that the Government should leave them to their fate, and do nothing to restore their national reputation, especially as a new Governor-General was coming out, doubtless with new counsels, and the Duke of Wellington, now in power, would never sanction so inglorious a policy. He was overruled, however, by the majority, and the letter was sent to the king. An answer came demanding that they should put their seals to the document. Another council was held; Colonel Broadfoot renewed his remonstrances; he was joined by Colonel Dennie, Captain Abbott, and Colonel Monteith. An answer was sent which left the garrison free to act as circumstances might direct. Next day tidings came from Peshawur, that large reinforcements were moving up through the Punjab, and that all possible efforts were to be made for their relief. There

was no more talk of negotiation; every one felt that it was his duty to hold out to the last.

The place had been fortified so well as to be able to defy any attack that could be made upon it without artillery. Captain Broadfoot had insisted on bringing an ample supply of working tools, which were found to be of the greatest advantage. In the official report of General Sale, written by Havelock, there is a description of the works that had been executed, and the immense labour that had been undertaken to clear away everything that could serve as a cover for the enemy. They demolished forts and old walls, filled up ravines, destroyed gardens, and cut down groves; they raised the parapets six or seven feet high, repaired and widened the ramparts, extended the bastions, re-trenched three of the gates, covered the fort with an outwork, and excavated a ditch, ten feet deep and twelve wide, round the whole of the walls. The enemy soon approached, under the command of Akbar Khan; the white tents, which the English were obliged to abandon, appearing in the distance. But the garrison were full of confidence, proudly rejoicing in the work of their hands, and feeling that they were perfectly safe behind the defences which they had raised with so much labour. In a short time, however, they had an astounding illustration of the vanity of all confidence in human strength, showing that, in a moment, it can be turned into weakness.

On the 19th of February the men heard an awful and mysterious sound, as if of thunder, beneath their feet. They instantly rushed to their arms, and thus many lives were saved. A tremendous earthquake shook down all the parapets built up with so much labour, injured several of the bastions, cast to the ground all the guard-houses, made a considerable breach in the rampart of a curtain in the Peshawur face, and reduced the Caubul gate to a shapeless mass of ruins. In addition to this sudden destruction of the fortifications—the labour of three months—one-third of the town was demolished. The report states that, within the space of one month, the city was thrown into alarm by the repetition of full 100 shocks of this phenomenon of Nature. Still, the garrison did not lose heart or hope. With indomitable energy, they set to work immediately to repair the damage. The shocks had scarcely ceased when the whole garrison was told off into working parties, and before night the breaches were scalped, the rubbish below cleared away, and the ditches before them dug out. From the following day all the troops off duty were continually at work, and such was their energy and perseverance, that by the end of the month the parapets were entirely restored, or the curtain filled in, where restoration was impracticable, and every battery re-established. The breaches were built up with the rampart doubled in thickness, and the whole of the gates re-trenched. So marvellously rapid was the work of restoration, that Akbar Khan declared that the earthquake must have been the effect of English witchcraft, as Jellalabad was the only place that escaped.

At length General Pollock had found himself in a

position to advance for the relief of the garrison, and marched his force to Jumrood. On the 4th of April, while the troops were encamped at that place, he issued final orders for the guidance of his officers. The army started at twilight, without sound of bugle or beat of drum. The heights on either side of the Khybur Pass were covered with the enemy, but so completely were they taken by surprise, that our flankers had achieved a considerable ascent before the Khyburese were aware of their approach. The enemy had thrown across the mouth of the Pass a formidable barrier, composed of large stones, mud, and heavy branches of trees. In the meantime the light infantry were stealing round the hills, climbing up precipitous cliffs, and getting possession of commanding peaks, from which they poured down a destructive fire upon the Khyburese, who were confounded by the unexpected nature of the attack. The confidence which arose from their intimate knowledge of the nature of the ground now forsook them, and they were seen in their white dresses flying in every direction across the hills. The centre column, which had quietly awaited the result of the outflanking movements by the brave and active infantry, now moved on, determined to enter the Pass, at the mouth of which a large number of the enemy had been posted; but finding themselves outflanked, they gradually retreated. The way was cleared, and the long train of baggage, containing ammunition and provisions for the relief of Jellalabad, entered the formidable defile. The heat being intense, the troops suffered greatly from thirst; but the sepoy behaved admirably, were in excellent spirits, and had a thorough contempt for the enemy. It was now discovered that their mutinous spirit arose from the conviction that they had been sacrificed by bad generalship. Ali Musjid, from which the British garrison had made such a disastrous and ignominious retreat, was soon triumphantly re-occupied. When there, General Pollock wrote that nothing refreshed him more than the thought that the sepoy had fairly won back the reputation they had lost. They had been under arms since three o'clock in the morning, and after a hard day's work they had to bivouac on a bitterly cold night. But they bore all patiently, proud of their success, and willing to make every exertion necessary to secure the advantages they had gained. Leaving a Sikh force to occupy the Pass, General Pollock pushed on to Jellalabad. Writing to a friend, he said, "We found the fort strong, the garrison healthy, and, except for wine and beer, better off than we are. They were, of course, delighted to see us; we gave three cheers as we passed the colours, and the band of each regiment played as it came up. It was a sight worth seeing; all appeared happy. The band of the 13th had gone out to play them in, and the relieving force marched the last two or three miles to the tune, "Oh, but you've been long a-coming."

But they were not then in the position of a beleaguered garrison. Before relief came, they had won a victory that covered them with glory. The troops had been in the highest pluck, and never seemed so happy as when they could encounter any portion of the enemy. In this

state of feeling an idea began to take possession of the officers that they were able to capture Mahomed Akbar's camp. A false report had come to the Sirdar, that General Pollock had been beaten back with great slaughter in the Khybur Pass; and in honour of this event, his guns fired a royal salute. A rumour also reached the garrison that there had been a revolution at Cabul, and that the enemy was obliged to break up his camp and hasten back to the capital. Whether either or both these reports should prove true, the time seemed to have come for General Sale to strike a blow. A council of war was held; the general would have shrunk from the responsibility of an attack upon the camp; "but," says Mr. Kaye, "Havelock was at his elbow—a man of rare coolness and consummate judgment, with military talents of a high order, ripened by experience, and an intrepidity in action not exceeded by that of his fighting commander. He it was who, supported by other eager spirits, urged the expediency of an attack on the enemy's position, and laid down the plan of operations most likely to insure success. Sale yielded with reluctance, but he did yield; it was determined that at daybreak on the following morning they should go out and fight."*

Akbar Khan, at the head of 8,000 men, was aware of their approach and ready to receive them. On issuing from the gate, General Sale had ordered Colonel Dennie forward, to attack a small fort, from which the enemy had often molested the garrison. The colonel, at the head of the brave 13th, rushed to the fort; but having entered the outer wall, they found themselves exposed to a murderous fire from the defences of the inner keep. There Colonel Dennie received a mortal wound, a ball passing through his sword-belt. Falling forward on his saddle, his horse was led back by two orderlies; "and he died," says Mr. Gheig, "with the sound of battle in his ears, but not living to be assured that it would end triumphantly." Sale now gave orders for a general attack on the enemy's camp, and in his dispatch he thus describes the result:—"The artillery advanced at a gallop, and directed a heavy fire upon the Afghan centre, whilst two of the columns of infantry penetrated the line near the same point, and the third forced back its left from its support on the river, into the stream of which some of his horse and foot were driven. The Afghans made repeated attempts to check our advance by a smart fire of musketry, by throwing forward heavy bodies of horse, which twice threatened the detachments of foot under Captain Havelock, and by opening upon us three guns from a battery screened by a garden wall, and said to have been served under the personal superintendence of the Sirdar. But in a short time they were dislodged from every point of their position, their cannon taken, and their camp involved in a general conflagration. The battle was over, and the enemy in full retreat, by about seven a.m. We have made ourselves masters of two cavalry standards, re-captured four guns lost by the Cabul and Gundamne forces—the restoration of which to our Government is

* "The War in Afghanistan," vol. ii., p. 95.

matter of much honest exultation among the troops—seized and destroyed a great quantity of material and ordnance stores, and burnt the whole of the enemy's tents. In short, the defeat of Mahomed Akbar, in open field, by the troops whom he had boasted of blockading, has been complete and signal. The field of battle was strewn with the bodies of men and horses, and the richness of the trappings of some of the latter seemed to attest that persons of distinction were among the fallen. The loss on our side was remarkably small—seven privates killed, and three officers and fifty men wounded."

Great was the joy inspired by these successes. The new Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, issued a proclamation, in which he stated that he felt assured every subject of the British Government would peruse with the deepest interest and satisfaction the report of the entire defeat of the Afghan troops, under the command of Mahomed Akbar Khan, by the garrison of Jellalabad. "That illustrious garrison, which, by its constancy in enduring privation and by its valour in action, had already obtained for itself the sympathy and respect of every true soldier, has now, sallying forth from its walls under the command of its gallant leader, Major-General Sir Robert Sale, thoroughly beaten, in open field, an enemy of more than three times its numbers, taken the standards of their boasted cavalry, destroyed their camp, and re-captured four guns, which, under circumstances that can never occur again, had, during the last winter, fallen into their hands."

These feelings of joy and satisfaction were shared by the Home Government. On the 20th of February, 1843, the Duke of Wellington, in the House of Lords, moved a vote of thanks to Sir George Pollock, Sir William Nott, Sir John McCaskill, Major-General England, and the other officers of the army, both European and native, for the intrepidity, skill, and perseverance displayed by them in the military operations in Afghanistan, and for their indefatigable zeal and exertions throughout the late campaign. Lord Auckland seconded the motion, which was carried without opposition. Sir Robert Peel brought forward a similar motion in the House of Commons on the same day, following the example of the Duke, in giving a succinct narrative of the events of the war, and warmly eulogising, amidst the cheers of the House, the officers who had most distinguished themselves. The resolution passed without opposition, Mr. Hume having withdrawn an amendment which he had proposed.

It would be useless to encumber these pages with a detailed narrative of the desultory conflicts that occurred at Kandahar, where General Nott commanded; or at Khelat-i-Ghilzye, a post entrusted to Captain Lawrence; or in the country about Ghuznee, the garrison of which, commanded by Captain Palmer, was compelled to surrender for want of water. He was an officer in General Nott's division, and by his brother officers the fall of the place was regarded as more disgraceful than the loss of Caubul. It is stated that Brigadier Nicholson, who fell at Delhi in 1857, "then quite a stripling, when the enemy entered Ghuznee, drove them thrice

back beyond the walls, at the point of the bayonet, before he would listen to the orders given to him to make his company lay down their arms. He at length obeyed, gave up his sword with bitter tears, and accompanied his comrades to an almost hopeless imprisonment." At length Generals Pollock and Nott had effected a junction which enabled them to overawe the Afghans. They were now at the head of two forces in excellent health and spirits, eager to advance on Caubul and avenge the national honour of England, which had been so grievously insulted. Lord Ellenborough had come to the resolution that it was no longer necessary for the British Government to peril its armies, and with its armies the Indian Empire, by occupying that country. All that was now required to be done rested solely upon military considerations, and especially upon regard to the safety of the detached bodies of our troops at Jellalabad, at Ghuznee, at Khelat-i-Ghilzye, and Kandahar, and finally to the establishment of our military reputation by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Afghans, which would make it appear to them, as well as to our subjects and allies, that we had the power of inflicting punishment upon those who commit atrocities and violate their faith, and that we withdrew ultimately from Afghanistan, not because of any deficiency of means to maintain our position, but because we were satisfied that the king we had set up had not, as we erroneously imagined, the support of the nation over which he was placed. These matters, therefore, became the main objects of concern to the new Governor-General, and effectual measures were taken to carry them out. Indeed, he had got the notion that the glorious task had devolved on him to save our Eastern empire single-handed. In May he wrote as follows:—"The danger is in the position of the army. Almost without communication with India, too far off to return quickly at any season, unable from the season to return now without adequate supplies of food or carriage, this is the danger which all the great statesmen of India would perpetuate if they could, and, while they maintain it, destroy the confidence of the sepoys, and ruin our finances. If," he continued, "I save this country, I shall save it in spite of every man in it who ought to give me support, but I will save it in spite of them all." The contempt with which he regarded all the great statesmen of India, he extended to the press, and his scorn of public opinion was such that he pretended that he would not condescend to read a newspaper. But it was believed that this was only a pretence, and that, like most men of vain minds and pompous manner, he was peculiarly sensitive with regard to the judgments of the press.

There was one object, however, to be gained which was deeply interesting to every Englishman in India as well as to the public at home, without which no victories, however glorious, and no infliction of punishment, however terrible, upon the enemy, would have been considered satisfactory—namely, the deliverance of the captives which were still held as hostages by Akbar Khan. On this subject the two generals, Pollock and Nott, held a consultation. Nott believed that the

Government had thrown the prisoners overboard, and protested against taking any measures for their recovery. But Pollock was determined that the effort should be made. The duty was cheerfully undertaken by Sale, whose own heroic wife was among the prisoners. He started in pursuit, taking with him a brigade from the army at Jellalabad. They had been hurried on towards the inhospitable regions of the Indian Caucasus, not suffered to sleep at night, and were stared at as objects of curiosity by the inhabitants of the villages through which they passed. But, although every hamlet and fort they passed, after daybreak, poured forth its inhabitants to gaze and wonder at the Feringhee captives, not an uncivil word was uttered, not an unfriendly gesture was to be seen. On the contrary, they were comforted by many sympathising words and looks from the people. In some places the children were treated to cakes and sweetmeats, and other marks of kindness. They needed sympathy. The days were very hot, the nights intensely cold. Whenever they were permitted to rest, it was in wretched old forts, in apartments destitute of every comfort, noisome and filthy. Painfully they dragged their weary limbs up steep ascents and over bare and desolate wastes. The officers gave up their horses to the ladies, the camel paniers being no longer secure. The number of the sick increased daily, especially among the soldiers and camp followers, for whom no carriages were provided.

They reached their destination, Bameean, on the 3rd of September, and there, in a short time, before Sale's brigade arrived, they had providentially effected their own ransom. The commander of their escort was Saleh Mahomed, a soldier of fortune, who had been at one time a soubahdar in Captain Hopkins's regiment of infantry, and had deserted with his men to Dost Mahomed. Between this man and Captain Johnson an intimacy sprang up, which the latter turned to account by throwing out hints that Saleh Mahomed would be amply rewarded, if, instead of carrying off his prisoners, he would conduct them in safety to the British camp. Days passed away without anything being done, till after their arrival at Bameean, when, on the 11th of September, Saleh Mahomed sent for Johnson, Pottinger, and Lawrence, and in a private room which had been appropriated to Lady Sale, he produced a letter which he had just received from Akbar Khan, directing him to convey the prisoners to Cooloom, and make them all over to the Wooles of that place. This seemed to be a sentence of hopeless captivity, but the minds of the officers were soon relieved by another piece of intelligence—namely, a message from General Pollock to the effect that if he released the prisoners he should receive a present of 20,000 rupees, and a life pension of 1,000 rupees a month. He then said, "I know nothing of General Pollock, but if you three gentlemen will swear by your Saviour to make good to me what Synd Moortega Shah states that he is authorised to offer, I will deliver you over to your own people. The offer was gladly accepted; an agreement was drawn

up, commencing as follows:—"We, gentlemen, Pottinger, Johnson, Mackenzie, and Lawrence, in the presence of God and Jesus Christ, do enter into the following agreement with Saleh Mahomed Khan: Whenever Saleh Mahomed Khan will free us from the power of Mahomed Akbar Khan, we agree to make him a present of 20,000 rupees, and to pay him monthly the sum of 1,000 rupees, and likewise to obtain for him the command of a regiment in the Government service; and we attest that this agreement is not false; and should we have spoken falsely, we will acknowledge ourselves to be false men even in the presence of kings." The other prisoners signed an agreement that they would pay their share to the officers above-mentioned, the married men to pay the same amount for their wives and families as for themselves. The ladies whose husbands were absent pledged themselves to pay in proportion to their husbands' allowances. The widows also agreed on their own account to pay such sums as might be demanded of them; and to this bond, which was written by Johnson on half a sheet of foolscap, all the prisoners attached their signatures. In pursuance of this agreement, Saleh Mahomed and his European allies proclaimed their revolt to the people of Bameean and the surrounding country. They deposed the governor of the place, and appointed a more friendly chief in his stead. They supplied themselves with funds by seizing upon the property of a party of merchants who were passing that way. Major Pottinger assumed the functions of government, and issued proclamations, and called upon the chiefs to come in and make their salaam. But they might come for a different purpose, and hence they began to fortify themselves, and prepare for a very vigorous defence. While thus employed, a horseman was seen rapidly approaching from the Caubul side of the valley, who proved to be the bearer of glad tidings. Akbar Khan had been defeated by General Pollock at Teyeen, and had fled, no one knew whither. This was delightful news indeed. The power of the oppressor was now broken, and the captives were free. Early next morning they started for Caubul, sleeping the first night upon stony beds under the clear moonlight; they were awakened by the arrival of a friendly chief, who brought a letter from Sir Richmond Shakespear, stating that he was on his way to Bameean with a party of Kuzzilbash horse.

In the delirium of joy which this news excited, the party started up and hastened on their way, unconscious of hunger and fatigue. On the 17th of September a cloud of dust was observed to rise from the summit of a mountain pass in their front. It soon became evident there was a body of cavalry winding down the pass. Were they friends or foes? They might be the latter. Saleh Mahomed's drums were beaten; all stragglers were called in; every man stood to his arms; the whole force forming one line with no rear. But the alarm was unfounded—it was Shakespear with his cavalry. An English officer came galloping ahead of the party, and was soon in the midst of the liberated captives, shaking hands, offering congratulations, and endeavour-

THE SORTIE OF THE GARRISON OF JELLALABAD.



ing to answer the eager questions of his countrymen and countrywomen. Pushing on again, they were met by a large body of British cavalry and infantry, under the command of Sir Robert Sale. "In a little time the happy veteran had embraced his wife and daughter; and the men of the 13th had offered their delighted congratulations to the loved ones of their old commander. A royal salute was fired. The prisoners were safe in Sale's camp. The good Providence that had so long watched over the prisoners and the captives now crowned its mercies by delivering them into the hands of their friends. Dressed as they were in Afghan costume, their faces bronzed by much exposure, and rugged with beards and moustachios of many months' growth, it was not easy to recognise the liberated officers, who now came forward to receive the congratulations of their friends."

The safety of the prisoners diffused universal joy throughout the camps of the two generals; but there was one thing necessary, in their opinion, in which the Government concurred, in order to give the crowning proof of our complete triumph, and to restore the unquestionable supremacy of our power, and compel the respect and fidelity of the neighbouring provinces. This was the signal punishment of Caubul for the atrocities that had been perpetrated there. The hostile chiefs were now as eager to conciliate, as submissive in their tone as they had been cruel and arrogant. Even Akbar Khan professed the greatest friendship for the British, and repudiated the acts that had been done in his name, at the same time restoring to his friends Captain Bygrave, the last prisoner he had in his possession. The Afghans had a maiden fortress in the town of Istaliff, which is built upon two ridges of the spur of Hindoo Koosh, which forms the western boundary of the beautiful valley of Kohistan. There, in its fortified streets and squares, as in a safe asylum, they had collected their treasures and their women. The sagacious Havelock suggested that the capture of this place, believed to be impregnable, would be a great stroke of policy. General M'Caskill, therefore, made a rapid march upon it, and after a desperate struggle, in which Havelock greatly distinguished himself, the place was stormed in gallant style, the Afghans in every direction giving way before our attacking columns. The people, panic-stricken, thought only of saving their property and their women; and when our troops entered the town, the face of the mountain beyond was covered with laden baggage cattle, whilst long lines of white-veiled women striving to reach a place of safety wound up the hill-side. The general, respecting the honour of the women, would suffer no pursuit, while those who fell into the hands of our soldiers in the town were safely delivered over to the care of the Kuzzil-Bashas. Much booty, however, was taken, and the town was partially fired.

The fate of Caubul was now to be decided. Some mark of just retribution should be left upon it, and General Pollock determined to destroy the great bazaar, where the mangled remains of our murdered envoy had been exposed to the insults of the inhabitants. The

buildings were therefore blown up with gunpowder, the design being to allow the work of destruction to extend no further. But it was impossible to restrain the troops. "The cry went forth that Caubul was given up to plunder. Both camps," wrote Major Rawlinson, "rushed into the city, and the consequence has been the almost total destruction of most parts of the town, except the Gholom-Khana quarter and the Balla-Hissar. Numbers of people—about 4,000 or 5,000—had returned to Caubul, relying on our promises of protection, rendered confident by the comparative immunity they had enjoyed during the early part of our sojourn here, and by the appearance ostentatiously put forth of an Afghan Government. They had many of them re-opened their shops. These people have been now reduced to utter ruin; their goods have been plundered, and the houses burnt over their heads. The Hindoos in particular, whose numbers amount to some 500 families, have lost everything they possessed, and they will have to beg their way to India in the rear of our columns." Mr. Kaye puts forth the best apology that can be made for this wholesale destruction. "When we consider," he says, "the amount of temptation and provocation—when we remember that the comrades of our soldiers and the brethren of our camp-followers had been foully butchered by thousands in the passes of Afghanistan; that everywhere tokens of our humiliation and of the treachery and cruelty of the enemy rose up before our people, stinging them past all endurance and exasperating them beyond control, we wonder less that, when the guilty city lay at their feet, they should not wholly have reined in their passions, than that in such an hour they should have given them so little head." *

Having thus accomplished their mission, the two armies returned in triumph to India. Lord Ellenborough was delighted. He was now at Simla, in the very house whence his predecessor had issued his proclamation for the restoration of the king of Afghanistan—the Charles X. of that country—which had been the cause of all our disasters. On the 1st of October, the anniversary of the day when two years before, he had reversed the policy of Lord Auckland, he issued a proclamation from the same room. It is a well-written State paper, ably reviewing the situation of Indian affairs, and clearly announcing the future policy of our Indian Government. It is historically important and deserves to be permanently recorded in the history of England:—"The Government of India directed its army to pass the Indus, in order to expel from Afghanistan a chief believed to be hostile to British interests, and to replace upon his throne a sovereign represented to be friendly to those interests and popular with his former subjects. The chief believed to be hostile became a prisoner, and the Sovereign represented to be popular was replaced upon his throne; but after events which brought into question his fidelity to the Government by which he was restored, he lost by the hands of an assassin the throne he had only held amidst insurrections, and his death was preceded and followed by still

existing anarchy. Disasters unparalleled in their extent, unless by the errors in which they originated, and by the treachery by which they were completed, have in one short campaign been avenged upon every scene of past misfortune; and repeated victories in the field, and the capture of the cities and citadels of Ghuznee and Caubul, have again attached the opinion of invincibility to the British arms. The British armies in possession of Afghanistan will now be withdrawn to the Sutlej. The Governor-General will leave it to the Afghans themselves to create a government, amidst the anarchy which is the consequence of their crimes. To force the sovereign upon a reluctant people would be as inconsistent with the policy as it is with the principles of the British Government, tending to place the arms and resources of that people at the disposal of the first invader, and to impose the burden of supporting a sovereign without the prospect of benefit from his alliance. The Governor-General will willingly recognise any Government approved by the Afghans themselves, which shall appear desirous and capable of maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring states. Content with the limits Nature appears to have assigned to its empire, the Government of India will devote all its efforts to the establishment and maintenance of general peace, to the protection of the sovereigns and chiefs, its allies, and to the prosperity and happiness of its own faithful subjects. The rivers of the Punjab and Indus, and the mountainous passes and the barbarous tribes of Afghanistan, will be placed between the British army, and an enemy approaching from the west, if, indeed, such an enemy there can be, and no longer between the army and its supplies. The enormous expenditure required for the support of a large force, in a false military position, at a distance from its own frontier and its resources, will no longer arrest every measure of improvement of the country and of the people. The combined army of England and of India, superior in equipment, in discipline, in valour, and in the officers by whom it is commanded, to any force which can be opposed to it in Asia, will stand in unassailable strength upon its own soil, and for ever, under the blessing of Providence, preserve the glorious empire it has won in security and in honour. The Governor-General cannot fear the misconstruction of his motives in thus frankly announcing to surrounding states the pacific and conservative policy of his Government. Afghanistan and China have seen at once the forces at his disposal, and the effect with which they can be applied. Sincerely attached to peace for the sake of the benefits it confers upon the people, the Governor-General is resolved that peace shall be observed, and will put forth the whole power of the British Government to coerce the state by which it shall be infringed."

Had Lord Ellenborough rested satisfied with this proclamation, all would have been well; but he issued another proclamation which at once shocked the religious feelings of the people of England by its profanity, and covered him with ridicule by its absurdity. He meant it to be a great stroke of policy; but it was simply a foolish and gratuitous concession to an idolatrous priesthood,

while it exasperated the pride and fanaticism of the Mahometans. This was the celebrated Somnauth Proclamation. Its authenticity was at first gravely doubted in India, but when, at length, it was placed beyond doubt, there was an outburst of censure and ridicule such as never before overwhelmed a Governor-General of India. The following is a copy of this famous proclamation:—

"My brothers and my friends,—Our victorious army bears the gates of the Temple of Somnauth in triumph from Afghanistan, and the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahomed looks upon the ruins of Ghuznee. The insult of 800 years is at last avenged. The gates of the Temple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory, the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus. To you, princes and chiefs of Sirhind, of Rajwarra, of Moliva, and of Gugerat, I shall commit this glorious trophy of successful war. You will, yourselves with all honour, transmit the gate of sandal wood through your respective territories to the restored Temple of Somnauth. The chiefs of Sirhind shall be informed at what time our victorious army will first deliver the gates of the Temple into their guardianship at the foot of the bridge of the Sutlej. My brothers and my friends, I have ever relied with confidence upon your attachment to the British Government. You see how worthy it proves itself of your love, when, regarding your honour as its own, it exerts the power of its arms to restore to you the gates of the Temple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your subjection to the Afghans. For myself, identified with you in interest and in feeling, I regard with all your own enthusiasm, the high achievements of that heroic army, reflecting alike immortal honour upon my native and upon my adopted country. To preserve and to improve the happy union of two countries, necessary as it is to the welfare of both, is the constant object of my thoughts. Upon that union depends the security of every ally, as well as of every subject of the British Government, from the miseries whereby in former times India was afflicted. Through that alone, has our army now waved its triumphant standards over the ruins of Ghuznee and planted them upon the Balla-Hissar of Caubul. May that good Providence, which has hitherto so manifestly protected me, still extend to me its favour, that I may so use the power now entrusted to my hands, as to advance your prosperity and secure your happiness by placing the union of our two countries upon foundations which may render it eternal. "ELLENBOROUGH."

One might have supposed that the princes, chiefs, and people of India thus addressed by the supreme representative of a Christian nation were all pure Hindoos; and that the temple from which Sandal-gates had been carried away, 800 years before, was still in their possession; whereas it was in ruins, and the sacred ground on which it stood was trodden by Mahometans. Even if the temple had been standing and occupied by the ancient idols, the Hindoo priests would have regarded the gates as polluted by being so long in the possession of unbelievers. Viewed as the reversal of a national humiliation the

act was equally absurd. It could be no gratification to a subjugated race to have restored to them by a foreign power a trophy that had been carried away 800 years before. ‡ The style of Oriental pomp in which the proclamation was written, heightened the folly of the whole proceeding, and made the defence of Lord Ellenborough a very difficult matter with the Home Government. But for this unfortunate escapade, he might have retired with dignity as an enlightened, energetic, and able Governor-General, who had done good service in putting an end to the "political system" by which we were continually entangled in the squabbles of the native states, and had wasted the resources of our empire in fighting the battles of their wicked and worthless dynasties.

CHAPTER LVII.

Mr. Villiers's Motion again Defeated—The Association becomes the Anti-Corn-Law League—The Anti-Corn-Law Circular—The League Agitation—Colonel Thompson—Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn-Law Rhymist—Obstructions to the League Missionaries—Riots at the Anti-Corn-Law Lectures—Attacks of the Press upon the League—Government interference with the Anti-Corn-Law Circular—Great Banquet in the Temporary Pavillion at Manchester—Deputations to the Government and to the Conservative Leaders—Mr. Villiers's Motion in 1840—Food Riots in Ireland—Change of Tactics of the League—The Walsall Election—The Chartists hired to obstruct the League—The Import Duties Report—Government Proposition of a Fixed Duty—Failure of Government Appeal to the Country as Free Traders—Lord Sydenham's remarkable Prophecy—Wide-spread Distress in the Country—Sir Robert Peel's Sliding Scale—Secession of the Duke of Buckingham—Procession of Anti-Corn-Law Delegates to the House—Financial Statement of Sir Robert Peel—Details of the New Corn Law—Mr. Cobden returned for Stockport—Dissatisfaction of the Country with the Sliding Scale—The Minister burned in Effigy—Proposal for an Income Tax—Great Reform of the Tariff—Conversion of Sir Robert Peel to Free Trade Principles—Dissatisfaction of Supporters of the Government—The "Velveten Plot"—The Sugar Duties—Position of the Government on the Free Trade Question at the close of the Session of 1842.

ON the 12th of March, 1839, Mr. Villiers again moved for a committee of the whole House to take into consideration the act regulating the importation of foreign corn, and the Manchester delegates were once more in London to watch the progress of events. On this occasion the House again decided, by 342 votes to 195, not to take the subject into consideration, and of these 195 there were probably a large number who would have gone over to the other side if the question had been one of total repeal of the bread tax. The defeat was of course expected; but the members of the association immediately assembled again, and issued an address to the public, in which for the first time they recommended the formation of a permanent union, to be called the Anti-Corn-Law League, and to be composed of all the towns and districts represented in the delegation, and as many others as might be induced to form Anti-Corn-Law associations, and to join the League. Delegates from the different local associations were to meet for business from time to time at the principal towns represented; but in order to secure unity of action, it was proposed that the central office of the League should be established at Manchester, and that to its members should be entrusted the duties of engaging lecturers, obtaining the co-operation of the public press, establishing and conducting a stamped periodical publication, and keeping up a constant correspondence with

the local associations. The delegates then parted, becoming so many local missionaries for spreading the doctrines of the new crusade. The Manchester Association had issued a large number of handbills and placards. It now began to publish more largely and systematically a series of pamphlets. Among these were "Facts for Farmers," in which it was shown to demonstration that, whatever might be the interest of the landowners, their tenants had no real share in the benefits of their monopoly. The cheapness of the publications secured them an extraordinary sale wherever political questions were discussed. Mr. Villiers's speech, extending to thirty-two closely printed pages, was sold at three halfpence; Mr. Poulett Thompson's speech, occupying sixteen pages, at three farthings. When the appeals were made to the electors of the kingdom during the height of the agitation, as many as half a million each of the more popular tracts were issued at a time. In accordance with the resolution passed by the League at its formation in London, a fortnightly organ of the new movement was started on the 16th of April. Its title was the "Anti-Corn-Law Circular," and it bore on its front page the motto from their good and wise friend Earl Fitzwilliam's address to the landowners:—"Laws based, as the Corn Law is, on injustice and partiality, can never be of long endurance. They are only fit for fair weather, they cannot resist the storm." A preliminary address announced that a copy of the paper would be regularly forwarded to every newspaper, review, and magazine in the empire. The first number contained a "Modern History of the Corn Laws, by Richard Cobden," with various information on the progress of the movement. Meanwhile the work of lecturing went on. Free trade missionaries were dispatched to all parts, and, to the annoyance of the landlords, even preached their obnoxious doctrines to audiences in smock frocks in the agricultural towns and villages, where the views of the country party had hitherto held undisputed sway. Among the most remarkable of these speakers was Colonel Perronet Thompson, who, as has been already said, by his celebrated "Catechism of the Corn Laws," and his other writings, had done perhaps more than any other man of his time to confute the fallacies of the Protectionist party. The clear and terse style, the shrewd reasoning power, the apt and homely illustration, and, above all, the hearty sincerity and good temper of this remarkable man, were equally acceptable among the most refined or the least educated audiences.

In the same field was to be found the poet Ebenezer Elliott, now best known as the "Corn-Law Rhymist." By his addresses to his fellow-townsmen of Sheffield, his remonstrances with the infatuated followers of O'Connor, who fancied that their own cause was opposed to that of the Manchester League, and by his powerful Corn-Law Rhymes, Elliott rendered services to the movement of the highest value. When the Chartist convention announced their determination of obstructing the new League, Elliott wrote, "The convention, by defending monopoly and advising physical force, are fighting the battle of the aristocracy under the

people's colours—a battle ultimately for self-destruction, and which those magnificent wretches seem well able to fight for themselves without your assistance. I learn, from the newspapers of Saturday last, that your representatives in the convention (with the concurrence of your own man), are about to send deputations into the country, to advocate the starvation laws. 'Of those laws you will very soon have quite enough, and so, thank God, will their authors. If you like such laws, what use do you intend to make of the franchise when obtained? I have no wish to force my opinions upon you. No, be corn-lawed to your hearts' content, for we shall not have long to wait; but in the meantime, it must not be supposed that I am one of the body of men who are willing to be represented by persons capable of supporting such barbarous legislation.' A good specimen of Elliott's powers of versification is afforded by the following song:—

"Child, is thy father dead?"
 Father is gone!
 Why did they tax his bread?
 God's will be done!
 Mother has sold her bed;
 Better to die than wed!
 Where shall she lay her head?
 Home we have none!

"Father clamm'd * thrice a week,
 God's will be done!
 Long for work did he seek,
 Work he found none.
 Tears on his hollow cheek
 Told what no tongue could speak;
 Why did his master break?
 God's will be done!

"Doctor said air was best—
 Food we had none;
 Father, with panting breast,
 Groaned to be gone.
 Now he is with the blest!
 Mother says death is best!
 We have no place of rest,
 Yes, ye have one!"

The Anti-Corn-Law missionaries, as might be expected, found their task in some cases no easy one. At Doncaster one was informed, by the authorities, on his arrival, that his appearance was calculated to lead to a riot; but the borough magistrates refused to permit the presence of police for the protection of the lecturer, on the ground that the peace of the town was likely to be disturbed by his operations. The bills which had been shown in the shopkeepers' windows announcing the lecture were all removed. At Pontefract the Mayor refused the use of the Town Hall. At Tamworth, Sir Robert Peel's borough, the Mayor not only refused permission to the lecturer to use the Town Hall, but the two principal innkeepers also refused to allow the lecture to take place in their rooms. At Louth similar opposition was encountered. About two hours before the time appointed for the lecture a letter was received from the Mayor, stating that a deputation of respectable inhabitants of the borough had waited upon him to request that the lecturer should not be allowed the use of the

Town Hall, which had at first been granted to him. A concourse of people, of not less than three or four thousands, then met in the market place, and were addressed by the lecturer. Here a disturbance was occasioned by a well-dressed person in the crowd attempting to seize and destroy the lecturer's notes. Crowds of other persons kept up a perpetual hooting from the windows of adjoining houses, and fireworks were also thrown into the midst of the crowd, where the authorities had neglected to send police to prevent disturbance. After the lecture the speaker exhorted the people to form Anti-Corn-Law Associations, when he was responded to with cries of "We will! we will!" Crowds pressed forward to shake hands with the speakers; and cries of "God bless you and your good cause!" were heard among the people. The lecturers, however, before they left the town, were summoned before the magistrates, and fined for causing a disturbance. As the lecturers left the court, the crowd insisted upon hearing another address; and a farmer among them, whose field lay near the town, told them to go there, where they could not be fined; and, accordingly, the lecturers addressed the crowd from a cart in the farmer's field. At Wakefield—permission to use the Town Hall having been granted, and suddenly withdrawn, in a similar manner—great excitement was caused among the people. The lecturer, who had received no notice of the change in the determination of the authorities, found on his arrival the door of the hall shut, and a large crowd waiting for admission. Great indignation was expressed against the magistrates, and a number of the crowd being connected with the Working Men's Association in that town, who were that evening to have a lecture of their own, at once agreed to forego their own lecture, and to give the emissary from the Anti-Corn-Law League the use of their room, where the lecturer addressed a large and enthusiastic audience.

At Kidderminster an attempt was made to put out the lights in the lecture room, and benches were broken, and considerable damage done. At Stamford, where an audience of 2,000 persons assembled in the theatre to hear a lecture, a working man leaped unhurt from the gallery on to the stage, and planted himself significantly beside one of the rioters; while many from the pit clambered to the boxes, and shouted to the lecturer to go on and fear nothing. In the theatre at Huntingdon, a disgraceful scene of outrage took place, and the lecturer was compelled to flee. In Cambridge, also, the appearance of the lecturers was the signal for disorder. On the first evening they were permitted to deliver their addresses without interruption; but on the following day the students assembled in great strength, and with the sound of trumpets and other instruments of discord, succeeded in preventing them being heard. As usual in that place, the disturbance divided itself into what is called a "town and gown fight;" the subject under discussion is wholly lost sight of, and gownsmen and townsmen indulge their traditional animosity. One gownsmen,

who had made himself particularly prominent in the disturbance, roused the anger of the town party, who rushed to his box to turn him out. The gownsmen rushed to the defence of their fellow-student. A fierce battle ensued between the two parties, and it required strenuous exertions on the part of the Mayor and the police to put an end to the riot.

Some of these disturbers of the peace of the Anti-Corn-Law meetings, though ostensibly Chartists, were proved in the evidence given on the Walsall election case to be employed by the Conservative party. The League, in their publications, complained that it had been a matter of surprise to their lecturers to perceive that they had been dogged and beset in all parts of the kingdom by certain "well-dressed, and apparently well-fed persons," who, under the pretence of advocating the people's charter, had, in reality, been the defenders and supporters of the bread-tax. These men had been known to take a journey of a hundred miles to oppose the lecturers. They made their appearance on one day at Leeds, on the morrow at Leicester, on the following day at Manchester. In whatever part of the kingdom the lecturers appeared, these mysterious men invariably made their appearance to take the part of the bread taxers. One who lectured in London and the suburbs, found wherever he went, three individuals followed him night after night. It was bitterly remarked that the spies of twenty years previously did the work of their employers, by tempting their deluded followers to commit crimes which conducted them to the gallows; and that there were again traitors in the garb of patriotism, who were playing the parts of the Olivers and Castles of other days. The spirit in which the Cambridge "gown" party had received the movement for giving bread and employment to the people, may be judged from the comments of a local paper, which, in speaking of the lecturers, said:—"It is rumoured that these fellows intend to pay us another visit; but if so, they ought to have timely notice that they will be held responsible for any breach of the peace that may ensue. The forbearance of the peaceful portion of the community may be taxed too far, and if the paid hirelings of a disloyal faction are to persist in inflaming the public mind with sentiments destructive of all moral right and order, we cannot call too strongly, at the present crisis, upon the well-disposed portion of the community to assist the authorities in putting down those revolutionary emissaries."

The metropolitan newspapers, on the Protectionist side, were not less illiberal in their remarks upon the movement. In copying the address of the League, the *Morning Herald* said:—

"It is undoubtedly incumbent on the agricultural body to lose no further time in counteracting the pernicious schemes of the Anti-Corn-Law League. The members of that League are, many of them, unprincipled schemers; whilst of those members who may claim credit for honesty of purpose, there are but few of whom it may not be alleged that they are at best conceited socialists. Insignificant, however, as may be the materials out of which the Anti-Corn-Law League has been fashioned, it

were worse than folly to shut our eyes to the probability that much mischief may, at no distant period, result from its increasing efforts to injure the agricultural interests of England. The League has always brought into play all the approved modes of poisoning the stream of public sentiment. Lecturers are paid to perambulate the country, and to declaim against the 'atrocities of landed monopoly!' What though those men be empty, conceited blockheads? They are permitted to tell their story, day by day, without contradiction, and their uncontradicted falsehoods come, at length, to be regarded as truths! The League, in like manner, issues, periodically, cheap publications condemnatory of the corn laws. These publications are diffused with incredible zeal, and the result will yet be visible on the state of public opinion. It is time, we repeat, that the agricultural interest should shake off its apathy in this matter. The corn laws are not to be saved by parliamentary majorities alone. Parliamentary majorities are really effective so long as they reflect the sentiments of the majority out of doors. Let public opinion be subjected for a long period to vicious influences, and the disposition in Parliament to defend the corn laws will wax fainter and fainter. We trust, therefore, that the appeal of the committee of the Central Agricultural Society will be responded to with alacrity by the body of the landowners. The agricultural body must, in self-defence, adopt the tactics of their antagonists. If they shall do so, the Anti-Corn-Law League will very speedily be disposed of."

The *Morning Post* said: "But the manufacturing people exclaim, 'Why should we not be permitted to exchange the produce of our industry for the greatest quantity of food which that industry will anywhere command?' To which we answer, 'Why not, indeed? Who hinders you? Take your manufactures away with you by all means, and exchange them anywhere you will, from Tobolsk to Timbuctoo; but do not insist on bringing your foreign corn here untaxed, to the ruin of your countrymen engaged in the production of corn. If nothing will serve you but to eat foreign corn, away with you, you and your goods, and let us never see you more. We do not want to drive you away. You are welcome to stay if you will; but remember, if you do, that "live and let live" is a fair, and honest, and English mode of proceeding.'" The *London Standard* wrote still more violently: "The present cry against the corn laws," remarked that journal, "is, at bottom, the work of a few commercial swindlers, though aided, no doubt, by the exertions of political swindlers, who see the benefit of an agitation calculated to distract public attention from the misconduct of the (Whig) Government. It is well, however, to remember that the commercial swindlers are the prime movers; because the honest class of traders, who would be the very first victims of a repeal of the corn laws, may be entrapped into joining the suicidal movement by what they believed to be good commercial names."

Government obstruction to the labours of the League was not wanting. After a few numbers of the *Anti-*

Corn-Law Circular had appeared, the Government officer intimated that it would be considered as a newspaper, and must bear a stamp on every copy. That the *Circular* conveyed news to the people was true enough; but it was certainly not a newspaper in the ordinary sense of the term, but one of those special journals not devoted to general information on public events, which in other instances had not been held liable to stamp duty. The Government, however, insisted, and the 15,000 copies of each number of the *Circular* came out burdened with what in those early days of the League agitation was a serious drawback—a tax of 15,000 pence. Herein, however, was shown the beneficial

This, however, was not the only advantage which the movement derived from these beneficial changes. "If the League," says Mr. Prentice, "were to send its tracts and letters to every village in the kingdom, in the work of enlightening its obscurest corners, it was desirable that there should be a cheap postage. Richard Cobden, and other free traders of Manchester, had earnestly forwarded, by their evidence and their labour, the scheme of an uniform penny postage, originated and most admirably worked out by Mr. Rowland Hill, Mr. Charles Knight, Mr. W. H. Ashurst, and others, in London. It triumphed over the opposition of the Government officials; and even the experiment of an uni-



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working for the people's welfare of the then recent changes in the stamp laws, and particularly of the postal reforms of Mr. Rowland Hill. A few years earlier the duty of 15,000 pence would have been 60,000 pence, an amount which must have crushed the new organ of popular rights, or, at least, limited its circulation so greatly as to have reduced its influence to a mere trifle. But the payment of the penny was not all loss to the League. Fortunately, under the new postal law, it enabled the stamped journal to be sent free to any part of the kingdom—a fact which contributed powerfully to the dissemination of the joyful tidings of the approaching downfall of monopoly throughout the kingdom.

form fourpenny rate, to precede the wider postal reform, was greatly favourable to the operations of the League, now in close correspondence with the leading friends of free trade in every large town. When the penny postage rate came, the correspondence of the League increased a hundredfold."

The opening of the year 1840 saw no flagging in the efforts of the Manchester men to bring forward the question, which the "Annual Register" had just regarded as finally set at rest. It had been determined that a great meeting of delegates should be held in that city. There was no hall large enough to hold half of the then members even of the local association, and it

was therefore resolved to construct one. Mr. Cobden owned nearly all of the land then unbuilt on in St. Peter's Field—the very site of the Peterloo massacre of 1819, when the people who were met together for the discussion of the bread laws and of reform in Parliament had been cut down by the soldiers in a way which even to this hour is remembered in that part. In eleven days one hundred men constructed on this spot a temporary pavilion, which afterwards gave place to the permanent Free-trade Hall, which still stands, and is the favourite scene of great political meetings. The *Manchester Times* described the pavilion as comprising an area of nearly 16,000 square feet. It contained seats for dining 3,800 persons, and 500 more were admitted after the dinner. Above the president's chair there was a device in gas upon the wall, consisting of the word "Justice," in letters of a yard in length. Along the principal gallery, and extending the whole length of the pavilion, were the words, "Landowners! Honesty is the best policy." On one of the galleries the words, "Total and immediate repeal!" and on another, "A fixed duty is a fixed injustice!" The names of Fitzwilliam, Radnor, Westminster, Brougham, Clarendon, and Durham, members of the House of Peers who had been conspicuous exceptions to their class in the treatment of this question, were also inscribed in large letters on the draperies. Among the most conspicuous speakers at the banquet were Daniel O'Connell, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Milner Gibson; but perhaps the most interesting feature in the proceedings was the operative banquet, which took place on the following day. Five thousand working men, overlooked by their wives, sisters, and daughters in the galleries, sat down on that occasion. The name of the chairman, the speakers—in fact, the whole business of the meeting, were arranged by themselves. It was evident that the people were emancipating themselves from the advice of evil counsellors, and were beginning to see the importance to their interests of the movement of the League. The Chartist convention of the previous year had declared its approval of the corn laws, and its hostility to those who advocated cheap bread; but the Manchester operatives at this interesting meeting put forth no uncertain voice.

Shortly after this, and on the eve of Mr. Villiers's annual motion, two hundred delegates assembled in London, and waited on Lord Melbourne. Among them was the philanthropist, Joseph Sturge; but the time was not yet ripe for moving the Government. The Minister would not pledge himself. He declared himself, both in practice and theory, opposed to total repeal; and the deputation departed with the words, "My lord, we leave you with the consciousness of having done our duty; the responsibility for the future must rest upon the Government." A deputation to Sir Robert Peel and Sir James Graham, the leaders of the Opposition, was not more fortunate; and a similar deputation to Lord John Russell drew forth only the avowal that his lordship was favourable to "a fixed moderate duty up to the famine point"—a phrase which a contemporary states his lordship, with some hesitation and stammering, withdrew, substituting

the expression, "vanishing" point. At this meeting the Mayor of Carlisle gave a lamentable account of the state of the working classes in that city. He said that its peace was preserved mainly by the hope that the Anti-Corn-Law deputation would be able to effect something for their relief, and that if that hope should be disappointed, an agitation of a very different kind might be expected. The Borough-reeve of Manchester drew an affecting picture of the distresses of the working classes, and described one particular family, the members of which, after a life of economy and industry, had been compelled to pawn articles of furniture and clothes, one after another, till nothing was left but bare walls and empty cupboards. The emotion of the speaker finally choked his utterance, and his agitation was largely shared in by others present, while the Ministers, it is stated, looked with astonishment at a scene so strange to statesmen and courtiers. Mr. Joseph Sturge made a powerful appeal to the Ministers, placing the whole question upon the eternal principles of justice and humanity, which he said were shamefully outraged by a tax on the food of the people. The conference was closed by some eloquent remarks from Mr. Cobden, who told the Ministers that their decision would become matter of history, and would "stamp their characters as either representatives merely of class interests or the promoters of an enlightened commercial policy." "They chose the former," says Mr. Prentice, "and five years of further deep national distress and symptoms of consequent danger were required to convince them, out of office, that the promotion of general rather than of class interests was the legitimate business of legislation."

Mr. Villiers's motion again failed to move the serried phalanx of the upholders of the landowners' laws. Lord Morpeth acknowledged that the people were in deep distress, and said that, looking at the increasing prevalence and power of their demands, he thought the time was not far distant "when a freer and more unrestricted access of foreign corn would more amply repay the efforts of our domestic industry, and secure and extend the harmony of nations;" but the party headed by Sir Robert Peel were uncompromising in their opposition. Again that able leader opposed the motion with all his power, and owing to the manœuvres of the obstructive party, it became what is, in parliamentary language called "a dropped order." Mr. Villiers's renewed his motion on the 26th of May, 1840, after the presentation of petitions in support of his views bearing a quarter of a million of signatures. These signs of the growth of public opinion, to which Lord Morpeth had alluded, had no effect upon the House. There was a fixed determination to give neither Mr. Villiers nor the petitioners a fair hearing. He was assailed with a volley of every kind of uncouth sounds. The Speaker's calls to order were utterly disregarded, and it was not until, losing patience, he commanded the bar to be cleared, and members to take their seats, that the advocate of free trade could be heard by the reporters. It was useless to carry on the discussion amid this deafening clamour. Lord John Russell weakly demanded what the Govern-

ment could do, when a majority of the House was against any alteration in the law, and said he would vote for the motion, but not with a view to total repeal, as his own opinion was in favour of a moderate fixed duty. The House again divided, when 300 members voted for the landlords' monopoly, against only 177 in favour of inquiry.

While these events were occurring in London, renewed signs of that terrible Irish difficulty which, in the end, played so prominent a part in hastening the conversion of the party who had opposed free trade, began to be forced upon the attention of public men. On the 6th of June the *Limerick Reporter* stated that at Listowell the state of the poor was awful and deplorable, potatoes being sixteen-pence a stone, and there being no employment. One morning a boat, containing 560 barrels of oats, while waiting for the steamer at Garry Kennedy harbour, on its way to Limerick, was boarded by a large body of the populace, who possessed themselves of part of the grain. The police were sent for, but did not arrive in time to save the property. The *Dublin Pilot* reported that the people of Limerick, prompted by the cravings of hunger, had broken out in violent attacks on the flour stores and provision shops throughout the city, sparing none in their devastation. Flour was openly seized and distributed by the ring-leaders among the populace. The crowd were at length dispersed by the military, and the mayor called a meeting of the inhabitants, to provide some means of meeting the distress. In the meanwhile, ten tons of oatmeal had been distributed among the most wretched, which was stated for the present to have satisfied their cravings. These things, it was remarked, took place while corn and flour, to the amount of four or five millions sterling, might, in a few weeks, be had in exchange for our manufactured goods. The League at this period held a public examination of a number of agricultural labourers in London, to meet the allegations of the landlords that, whatever might be the distress in the towns, the farm-labourers were enjoying the benefits of the protective system. By this public examination, reported in the newspapers of the time, it was proved that the wages of the agricultural labourer in the summer were barely sufficient to procure the common necessities of life; that in winter, even those could not be had without aid from private charity or the parish; that clothes were worn year after year, till the numerous patches entirely covered the original texture; that wages did not rise with the price of food, and that consequently their condition was improved in cheap and greatly deteriorated in dear years.

When such facts as these, again and again urged upon the attention of the legislators, failed to produce any practical result, it became evident to the leaders of the League that they must do something more than be the educators of the people in the principles of free trade. One of the ablest of the London newspapers, which was friendly to their cause, had warned them that nothing could be done in the House of Commons until they could send members there expressly to support their views. It was noticed that the House would not listen to the

question of the corn laws—a dry question, no doubt; but the question of Irish registration, which the House had the patience to discuss, night after night, was certainly not more amusing. The fact was that the party which had an interest in opposing the Registration Bill returned some forty or fifty members; while the Corn-Law Leaguers, as yet, returned not one. The day had not come when any one thought it likely that the Manchester manufacturer, and the Rochdale weaver, who had spoken so eloquently at the tavern in Palace Yard, would transfer their eloquence to that House which scarcely deigned to notice the echo of their distant voices; but the Leaguers were now aroused to the importance of this branch of their tactics. The first fruit of this policy was seen in December, when the borough of Walsall being declared vacant, led to a contest long after remembered in the history of the movement. The Leaguers failed; but their failing was not barren. Captain Lyttelton, a Whig, and Mr. Gladstone, brother of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, were the rival candidates. The League sent a deputation to test the candidates on the question of corn law repeal, intending to give all their influence to the Whig candidate, if he pledged himself to advocate their objects. There was then no hope for assistance from Tory statesmen; and the League determined to bring forward a new candidate, in the person of Mr. J. B. Smith, one of the most prominent of their own body, and then President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. The contest did not come to an issue till January, 1841, and the whole intervening period was one of public meetings. Every newspaper and political publication in the kingdom made the contest the leading text for commentary. Addresses from nearly every town, from public meetings and public men throughout the country, were forwarded to the electors of Walsall. For the first time in the history of elections, issue was fairly joined on the question of free trade, all other party distinctions being forgotten.* The contest was extremely narrow, and great efforts were made by the Tory party to secure the return of the Protectionist candidate. The Chartists, who, in all parts of the kingdom, then acted on the suggestion of Mr. Feargus O'Connor to oppose the Anti-Corn-Law meetings, were conveyed from Manchester. Amid disturbances during which the military were called in, Mr. Gladstone was returned, but by the narrow majority only of 362, against 335 votes given for the League candidate. This event created a strong impression; but it was but the beginning of the efforts of the League in this field, which were destined again and again to be crowned with a more successful issue.

The cause of the free traders received at this period a valuable aid from the report of the select committee appointed on the 5th of May, 1840, on the motion of Mr. Hume, to inquire into the duties levied on imports, and to determine how far the duties were for the so-called protection of British industry, and how far for revenue only. The very words of the instructions to

* Somerville's "Free Trade and the League," 1853, vol. II., p. 507.

the committee indicated the great progress that had been made in the practical adoption of the maxims of political economy; for it may be safely said that, half a century earlier, the distinction would hardly have been understood by the bulk of members in the House. Committees of this kind are frequently granted as a matter of course, and are commonly regarded as a convenient mode of getting rid of troublesome questions, by shifting on to a select committee the labour of inquiry. In the great majority of instances their reports lead to no result; but in this case, such a mass of valuable evidence was collected, and made the text of so able a summary by the committee, of the results of the inquiry, that the *Import Duties Blue Book* at once became the text-book of all those members who professed the most enlightened views on commercial freedom. In submitting the evidence to the serious consideration of the House, the committee stated their persuasion that it could not be attentively examined without producing a strong conviction that important changes were urgently required in our Custom House legislation. They told the House that the tariff of the United Kingdom presented neither congruity nor unity of purpose. The schedule to the Act for Consolidating the Customs' Duties enumerated no fewer than 1,150 different rates of duty chargeable on imported articles, all other commodities paying duty as unenumerated; and very few of such rates appeared to have been determined by any recognised standard. It was difficult for any person unacquainted with the details of the tariff, to estimate the probable amount of duty to which any given commodity would be found subjected. There were cases where the duties levied were simple and comprehensive; others, where they fell into details both vexatious and embarrassing. The tariff often aimed at incompatible ends. The duties were sometimes meant to be both productive of revenue and for protective objects, which were frequently inconsistent with each other; hence they sometimes operated to the complete exclusion of foreign produce, and in so far no revenue was of course received; and sometimes, where the duty was inordinately high, the amount of revenue became in consequence trifling. Instead of making the receipt of revenue the main consideration, they allowed that primary object of fiscal regulations to be thwarted by an attempt to protect a great variety of particular interests, at the expense of the revenue, and of the commercial intercourse with other countries. Whilst the tariff had been made subordinate to many small producing interests at home, by the sacrifice of revenue in order to support these interests, the same principle of preference was found to be largely applied, by the various discriminatory duties, to the produce of our colonies, by which exclusive advantages were given to the colonial interests at the expense of the mother country.

The Committee found that there were in the tariff no less than 349 articles which produced less than £100 each per annum of customs duty—all the trouble and vexation involved in the maintenance of these 349 taxes being incurred for the sake of a total revenue of only

£8,050. They found also 132 articles producing only from £100 to £500 each, 45 producing from £500 to £1,000 each, and 107 producing only £1,000 to £5,000.

The total amount of customs' revenue received in the United Kingdom in the year ending January, 1840, was £22,962,610, of which total amount 17 articles, each producing more than £100,000, produced 94 per cent., or £21,700,630. "These 17 articles," observe the committee, "affording the largest amount of customs' revenue, are articles of the first necessity and importance to the community—viz., sugar, tea, tobacco, spirits, wine, timber, corn, coffee, butter, currants, tallow, seeds, raisins, cheese, cotton wool, sheep's wool, and silk manufactures; and that the interests of the public revenue have been by no means the primary consideration in levying the import duties is clear, inasmuch as competing foreign produce is in some instances excluded, and in others checked by high differential duties, levied for the protection of British colonial interests." In many cases, such differential duties did not answer the object proposed, for it appeared, in the case of foreign clayed sugars, where it was obviously intended they should be excluded from the British market, that the monopoly granted to British colonial sugars had so enormously raised the prices in our market, that they had lately come into consumption, though charged with a duty of 63 per cent., while our plantation sugars paid only 24s.

Another inconvenience which the differential duties created was, that they offered a premium for evading the intention of the Legislature. Foreign coffees were charged 1s. 3d. per lb., colonial coffees only 6d., while coffees imported from the Cape of Good Hope paid 9d. As might be expected, large quantities were shipped from the Brazils and Hayti to the Cape, and thence re-shipped to England; the English consumer thus paying the increased duty, and the difference of freight, while the foreign coffee was not excluded from the British market, though it was obviously the purpose of the law to exclude it.

The committee concluded their masterly report as follows:—

"Your committee cannot refrain from impressing strongly on the attention of the House that the effect, of prohibitory duties, while they are, of course, wholly unproductive to the revenue, is to impose an indirect tax on the consumer, often equal to the whole difference of price between the British article and the foreign article which the prohibition excludes. This fact has been strongly and emphatically urged on your committee by several witnesses; and the enormous extent of taxation so levied cannot fail to awaken the attention of the House. On articles of food alone, it is averred, according to the testimony laid before the committee, that the amount taken from the consumer exceeds the amount of all the other taxes which are levied by the Government. And the witnesses concur in the opinion that the sacrifices of the community are not confined to the loss of revenue, but that they are accompanied by injurious effects upon wages and capital; they diminish greatly the

productive powers of the country, and limit our active trading relations.

"Somewhat similar is the action of high protective duties. These impose upon the consumer a tax equal to the amount of the duties levied upon the foreign article, whilst they also increase the price of all the competing home-produced articles to the same amount as the duty; but that increased price goes, not to the Treasury, but to the protected manufacturer. It is obvious that high protective duties check importation, and, consequently, are unproductive to the revenue; and experience shows that the profit to the trader, the benefit to the consumer, and the fiscal interests of the country, are all sacrificed when heavy import duties impede the interchange of commodities with other nations. The inquiries of your committee have naturally led them to investigate the effects of the protective system on manufacture and labour. They find, on the part of those who are connected with some of the most important of our manufactures, a conviction, and a growing conviction, that the protective system is not, on the whole, beneficial to the protected manufacturers themselves. Several witnesses have expressed the utmost willingness to surrender any protection they have from the tariffs, and disclaim any benefit resulting from that protection; and your committee, in investigating the subject as to the amount of duties levied on the plea of protection to British manufactures, have to report that the amount does not exceed half a million sterling; and some of the manufacturers, who are supposed to be most interested in retaining those duties, are quite willing they should be abolished, for the purpose of introducing a more liberal system into our commercial policy. Your committee gather from the evidence that has been laid before them, that while the prosperity of our own manufactures is not to be traced to benefits derived from the exclusion of foreign rival manufactures, so neither is the competition of continental manufacturers to be traced to a protective system. They are told that the most vigorous and successful of the manufactures on the Continent have grown, not out of peculiar favour shown to them by legislation, but from those natural and spontaneous advantages which are associated with labour and capital in certain localities, and which cannot be transferred elsewhere at the mandate of the legislature or at the will of the manufacturer. Your committee see reason to believe that the most prosperous fabrics are those which flourish without the aid of special favours. It has been stated to your committee that the legislation of Great Britain, whenever it is hostile to the introduction of foreign commodities, is invariably urged by the foreign states that produce such commodities, as a ground and a sanction for laws being passed by them hostile to the introduction."

The effects of this remarkable storehouse of free trade facts and principles were not long in showing themselves, both in the speeches of members of Parliament and in the writings and discourses of public men out of doors.

But the time had not arrived when a Ministry could count on the support of the House in inaugurating a

sweeping reform of the tariff. We have already given our readers a narrative of the defeat of the Government of Lord Melbourne in 1841, of their appeal to the country, and final downfall in the month of August of that year. Although the free traders had given up the hope of any substantial relief from the Whig Government in the then condition of parties in the House, there was much in the course of events to dishearten men less earnest. The Whigs had shown a disposition, at least, to test the question of how far free trade might be made a rallying cry. In the speech from the throne, on the assembling of the new Parliament in September, the question of protection had distinctly been brought forward, and it soon became evident that the Ministry contemplated proposing at last a mitigation of the evils so forcibly pointed out by the Import Duties Committee. On the other hand, the party headed by Sir Robert Peel were deeply pledged to the support of the corn laws, and were little friendly to the views of the political economists. The very occasion of the accession of his party to power was apparently a triumph over the fiscal reformers. The country was alarmed at the condition of the revenue. The expenditure had constantly increased. During the six years Lord Melbourne had been in power the yearly estimates for the defence of the country had risen from £11,730,000 to £15,536,000. Every year there had been a considerable deficiency of income. In 1838 this deficiency was £1,428,000; in 1839, £430,000; in 1840, £1,457,000; and in 1841 it was announced as being £1,851,000. But a more alarming feature was the evidence that the revenue returns appeared to afford that the extreme limit of taxation had been reached, and that new burdens imposed upon the people, instead of bringing more to the exchequer, operated only to destroy industry, and to dry up the sources from which the resources of Government are obtained. An act had been passed in the previous year granting 5 per cent. additional duties on customs and excise, and 10 per cent. additional on assessed taxes. The revenue officers carried out the law, but as well might the farmer have directed his dairymaids to take 10 per cent. more milk for that year from all the cows on his farm. The scheme brought scarcely any additional revenue—an evidence of the truth of those principles of taxation which had been laid down by Sir Henry Parnell, not less striking than the rapid increase in the revenue which followed upon the reductions in taxation of two years later. The alterations in the duties on corn, sugar, and timber, proposed by the Whig Government in 1841, could hardly be expected to revive their popularity in the face of facts like these. Their scheme was to reduce the duty on foreign sugar from 63s. to 36s. per cwt.; by which they calculated that the revenue would gain £700,000—a curious evidence of the wickedness and folly of the existing law. By reducing the charge on Baltic timber from 55s. to 50s., and raising that of colonial growth from 10s. to 20s., a gain was anticipated of £600,000; and finally it was proposed to substitute for the mischievous and vexatious sliding scale a fixed duty on corn of 8s. a quarter. The latter change would

undoubtedly have been an improvement; but the Whig Government was too unpopular to regain strength by a few tardy proposals of this kind. Sir James Graham denounced the eight-shilling duty as an afterthought, and blamed the Government for stirring a topic so inflammatory. "It was," he said, "the most dangerous course a government could pursue with reference to the most dangerous subject. Desperate tenants," he added, sarcastically, in allusion to the extreme weakness of the Ministry, "under notice to quit, set fire to the premises which they are compelled to evacuate. Pirates, when they are no longer able to defend their vessel, rush with torches to the magazine. We are told of the strong man in despair who hit upon the stratagem of turning loose three hundred foxes with firebrands at their tails among the standing corn of the people. This is an exact representation of the Government, who at a dissolution will send forth their torches and their firebrands." It reads strangely in these days when we find a statesman denouncing, with all the dignity of a great moral teacher, the Ministers who proposed to give a suffering people permission to buy their corn where corn was abundant, and to exchange the products of their labour with those who were anxious to buy them; but it looked ominous for the free trade party when men with these views found increased strength in a general election. If the free-traders could obtain nothing through the Whigs, who had always, to some extent, been identified with commercial interests and the middle classes, how could they hope to attain their objects through the instrumentality of the representatives of the great landed proprietors, the professed enemies of trade and trade-made men? Such reasoning to many, in 1841, must have seemed conclusive; but there was one remarkable exception, in Mr. Poulett Thompson, afterwards Lord Sydenham, a member who had represented Manchester, and who, before he became trammelled with the shifty policy of office, had rendered services to the free trade cause of the highest importance. As far back as September, 1839, he had written in his private journal, "At the Exchequer all that can be hoped is to get through some bad tax. There is no chance of carrying the House with one for any great commercial reforms in timber, corn, sugar, &c. Party and private interests will prevent it. If Peel were in, he might do this, as he could muzzle or keep away his Tory allies, and we should support him. If he got in and had courage, what a field for him! But he has not."* The passage reads almost like a prophecy; for there could have been few persons at that time so far-seeing as even to imagine in the great Protectionist leader of 1839 the reformer of our tariff and the repealer of the iniquitous corn law. The truth must be told. Sir Robert Peel was not one of those statesmen who ground their policy in the great principles of morality and justice. His view, as is abundantly proved in his "Memoirs," was constantly directed to the management of his party in the House. He became the instrument of great re-

forms; but he initiated none. The habit of contesting for power, and of keeping it when obtained by the ordinary tactics of Parliamentary men, was stronger than his better instincts. The Leaguers knew this, and hoped for nothing from his hands; but the progress of a movement founded upon a great principle is, in a great degree, independent of party statesmen. While the free-traders appeared to have received a check, they were, in fact, making progress. The appeal made by the Ministers to the country on the question of free trade had been answered by giving increased strength to the Opposition; but those who took this for a proof that the agitation which had so long disturbed the tranquillity of the monopolist party was at end, soon found that the unpopularity of the Whigs was far from securing to their opponents a license to stand still. The country was still suffering from great depression. Gloom and discontent were throughout the land; and the Home Secretary of the new administration afterwards stated that there was hardly a day during this period when he had not found it necessary to have personal communication with the Horse Guards, as well as with the heads of the police in the metropolis, and in the manufacturing districts. There seemed, indeed, to be no limit to the distress of the people. In Carlisle, a committee of inquiry into the state of the town reported that one-fourth of their population were living in a state bordering on absolute starvation. In a population of 22,000, they found 5,561 individuals reduced to such a state of suffering, that immediate relief had become necessary to save them from actual famine. Terrible accounts from other and far distant neighbourhoods showed how wide spread was the evil. The manufacturers of the West of England appointed a committee to consider the distressed state of that district. Taking the town of Bradford, in Wilts, as an example, the committee reported that of the nineteen manufacturers carrying on business there in 1820, nine had failed, five had declined business from want of success, one had taken another trade, and two only remained. Of 462 looms, 316 were entirely out of work, and only 11 in full employment; and this distress, it must be remembered, could not be traced to one great overwhelming cause, like that of the failure of the cotton supplies of the present day. The blight which had spread over the field of British industry was to most men a puzzle; but the West of England committee, after reporting that the same condition of things existed at Chalford, Stroud, Ulley, Wotton, Dursley, Frome, Trowbridge, &c., did not hesitate to declare that the depression of trade which was destroying capital, and pauperising the working classes, was attributable to the legislation on the principle of protection. A public meeting was held at Burnley in the summer of 1842, to memorialise the Queen on the prevailing distress. At a great public conference of ministers of religion, held in Manchester in the previous autumn, it had been resolved that the existing corn laws were "impolitic in principle, unjust in operation, and cruel in effect;" that they were "opposed to the benignity of the Creator, and at variance

* "Memoir of Lord Sydenham," Edited by his Brother, 1843; p. 102.

with the very spirit of Christianity." This conference, which extended over an entire week of meetings, held both morning and evening, was attended by nearly 700 ministers. Their proceedings filled an entire volume, and attracted considerable attention throughout the kingdom. Similar conferences were afterwards held in a great number of towns.

In the face of such facts, it was clear that something must be done, even by a Protectionist Ministry, to diminish the effect of the growing belief that bad legislation was at the bottom of the country's difficulties. In the spring, men had looked eagerly for the budget of

came the meeting of Parliament, at which the Queen in person read the speech prepared by her Ministers. It acknowledged with deep regret "the continued distress in the manufacturing districts," and that the sufferings and privations which had resulted from it had been "borne with exemplary patience and forbearance." Finally, Her Majesty recommended to the consideration of both Houses "the laws which affect the import of corn and other articles." What was the intention of the Ministers was not then known; but it was already understood that, unlike their rivals, who had proposed a fixed duty, the new Government would attempt some



GEORGE WILSON, ESQ., CHAIRMAN OF THE ANTI-CORN-LAW LEAGUE.

the new Ministry. It had been bitterly remarked that at the time when Parliament was prorogued, there were nearly 21,000 persons in Leeds whose average earnings were only 11½d. per week—that in one district in Manchester alone a gentleman had visited 258 families, consisting of 1,029 individuals, whose average earnings were only 7½d. per head a week; and that while millions were in this deplorable condition, the duty on wheat stood at 24s. 8d. a quarter; and Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues demanded four months' leisure at their country abodes before they would permit the Legislature to take the distress of the people into consideration. At length

modification of the sliding scale. In the account of these transactions, which Sir Robert Peel left to be published by his executors after his death, he says:—"One of the first acts of the Government over which I presided (the Government of August, 1841) was to propose a material change in the corn law of 1828. I brought the subject under the consideration of my colleagues by means of written memoranda, in preference to proposals made verbally. In the first of these memoranda, I recommend my colleagues to undertake the revision of the corn laws of 1828, as an act of the Government. In the second, after

I had procured their assent to the principle of revision, I submit a proposal in respect to the extent to which such revision should be carried, and to the details of the new law." Then were seen the first symptoms of that estrangement from his party which reached its climax in 1846. Glaring as was the necessity for change, and evident as it was, even to the body of the land-owners, that they must choose between the mild reform of Peel and the more objectionable measure of his antagonists, there were members of the Cabinet who would still have held out for no concession. The Duke of Buckingham retired from the Ministry, and the Duke of Richmond refused to allow his son to move the address.

The statement of the Ministerial measure on the corn laws was fixed for the 9th of February, and the free-traders were prepared for the occasion. A great gathering of deputies from conferences and anti-corn-law associations took place in London, comprising, with metropolitan delegates, nearly 600 persons. The Minister, in a letter to the secretary of the delegation, had declined to see them as a deputation; but their presence became known to him in another way. On the morning of the debate, the whole of the deputies walked in procession to the House of Commons. The spectacle of nearly 600 gentlemen, walking arm-in-arm to the House, caused considerable excitement. Arrived at the entrance, their request to be admitted into the lobby was refused, and the delegates were somewhat roughly treated by the police. Still undaunted, however, they ranged themselves on each side of the door leading to the lobby, and saluted the members as they passed with cries of "Cheap food!" "A total repeal!" and the like. They then retreated to Palace Yard, where one of their body, mounting to an elevated situation, addressed his fellows with the words: "The doors of the lobby are closed against us by the order of those in power. It is impossible for us to get in to address the members as they pass. The Corn Laws were passed under the protection of the bayonet, and the Tories now ensconce themselves behind the truncheons of the police. But the time is fast coming when the voice of the people will be heard, and their oppressors will quail before it. Let us give three hearty cheers for the cause of free trade." * The cheers were given, and the deputies proceeded up Parliament Street. At the entrance to Privy Gardens they met Sir Robert Peel coming in his carriage to the House. He appeared, it is said, to think at first that the crowd were about to cheer him; but at the loud shouts of "No Corn Law!" "Down with monopoly!" "Give us bread and labour!" he leaned back in his carriage, grave and pale. In the House the excitement was considerable. It was filled in every part long before the usual time of commencing business. Below the bar were seen a number of distinguished strangers, among whom was the Duke of Cambridge. At five o'clock the Ministers moved that the paragraph in the Queen's speech relating to the Corn Laws be read by the clerk. This having

been done, and the House having resolved itself into a committee to consider the laws relating to corn, Sir Robert Peel proceeded to explain the measure which he was about to introduce for their modification. "His manner," says one of the newspapers of the time, "was anxious, uneasy. We never saw him address the House with so little confidence." The reception of the Premier's statement was not flattering. Listened to in watchful silence till he unfolded the details of the new sliding scale, he was then hailed from the Opposition benches with shouts of triumphant derision. The Whigs were relieved at finding that at least his measure was not calculated to be more popular out of doors than the fixed duty which they had proposed; but from his own side Sir Robert received little support. His customary cheerers were mute, and round him were black faces when he spoke of not wishing corn prices to range higher than 54s. to 58s. Towards the close of his speech there was a painful inattention, to which he could not refrain from alluding. The dead silence which prevailed while he was reading the proposed scale was followed, when he had concluded, by a great deal of laughter along the line of the Opposition benches, and a loud buzz of conversation on both sides of the House ensued, which did not quite subside during the remainder of the speech. The details of the measure were recapitulated by the Minister as follows:—

"When corn is at 59s., and under 60s., the duty at present is 27s. 8d. When corn is between those prices, the duty I propose is 13s. When the price of corn is at 50s. the existing duty is 36s. 8d., increasing as the price falls; instead of which I propose, when corn is at 50s. that the duty shall only be 20s., and that that duty shall in no case be exceeded. At 56s. the existing duty is 30s. 8d.; the duty I propose at that price is 16s. At 60s. the existing duty is 26s. 8d.; the duty I propose at that price is 12s. At 63s. the existing duty is 23s. 8d.; the duty I propose is 9s. At 64s. the existing duty is 22s. 8d.; the duty I propose is 8s. At 70s. the existing duty is 10s. 8d.; the duty I propose is 5s. Therefore it is impossible to deny, on comparing the duty which I propose with that which exists at present, that it will cause a very considerable decrease of the protection which the present duty affords to the home grower, a decrease, however, which in my opinion can be made consistently with justice to all the interests concerned."

In the comments with which he concluded his speech there were some signs of progress in the development of free trade ideas in the mind of the perplexed and trammelled minister, which are interesting to read by the light of what is now known of his subsequent career. He still maintained, in deference to the views of those who surrounded him, that it was the duty of the Legislature to take precautions to ensure that the main source of our supply of food should be derived from domestic agriculture; but he admitted that any protection, beyond what would compensate for the alleged special burdens upon agriculture, could only be vindicated on the ground that it was for the interest of all classes of the community. Mr. Cobden, who in the autumn of the

* *Spectator*, February 12, 1842.

previous year had been returned for Stockport, said a few words after the speech. He declared himself not surprised at the position, constituted as the Government was; for he had not, he said, expected to gather grapes of thistles; but he denounced the sliding scale as an insult to a suffering people. Following him, Lord John Russell gave notice that he should move a resolution to the effect that it was not advisable in any alteration of the corn laws to adopt the principle of a graduated sliding scale; and Mr. Villiers gave notice that, on going into committee, he should take the sense of the House on the policy of imposing any duty whatever on the foreign corn or food imported into the country.

The measure gave little satisfaction to the landowning party, and still less to the people. The Minister's declaration of opinion, that the people did not want corn in ordinary years, and that they only wanted enough, and had better not have a surplus, sounded in the ears of earnest men like a cruel jest. It was asked, who was to judge when corn was wanted? who to decide when the people who ate corn, had enough? The debate on Sir Robert Peel's proposition began on Monday, the 14th of February, and reached the close of its first stage on Wednesday, when Lord John Russell's motion was negatived by a majority of 123, in a House of 575. Mr. Villiers's motion was debated for five nights more, and finally negatived by a majority of 393 to 90. The Whigs now gave the people to understand that the eight shilling duty of the year before was abandoned, and that if they were again in power, they would propose a lower sum. But the people were beginning to feel that all their plans of duty, old and new, meant only that there should be less corn in England—less in the market, and less eaten by the people than if there were no duty at all. In the manufacturing towns the dissatisfaction was wide-spread. A preliminary meeting of merchants and manufacturers, and tradesmen at Manchester, agreed to a series of resolutions, energetically denouncing the Ministerial scheme, and calling upon the representatives of the borough, and such other members of the House of Commons as considered themselves the guardians of the rights of the people, to oppose by all the means with which the Constitution armed them, the granting of any supplies to Her Majesty until such time as the Corn Laws should have been totally and unconditionally repealed. At Salford a similar meeting was held. At Nottingham a large meeting, presided over by Lord Rankin, and at Staleybridge and Stockport, meetings passed resolutions condemnatory of the Government plan. In Manchester, Leicester, Rochdale, Huddersfield, Northampton, at Hawick in Scotland, Carnarvon, Derby, and at Hanley and Shelton in the Potteries, and many other towns, Sir R. Peel was burned in effigy. At the last place placards had been put up in several windows, bearing the words, "No more taxes will be paid here till the Corn Laws are repealed." At Derby some members of the Conservative party made oath before the magistrates during the burning of the representation of the Minister, that they considered their lives in danger, and the magistrates were induced to call

out a troop of dragoons. At Northampton the police rescued the counterfeit Sir Robert from the flames, and a riot ensued, which was not quelled until the soldiers were called out and about one hundred persons were arrested. In Parliament the position of the Minister was by no means an enviable one. The free-traders pressed him closely with questions which must have made him feel still more strongly the embarrassing part which he was compelled to play. Mr. Cobden, for instance, asked him whether he was going to lay before the House a specific statement of those peculiar burdens on land by which alone he had justified his measure of protection to the landowners. Sir Robert replied, evasively, that these burdens were matters of controversy, and that even writers on political economy differed about them. Mr. Cobden then asked for a statement of what, in the Minister's own opinion, constituted the alleged burdens; to which Sir Robert replied, sharply, that honourable members usually delivered their opinions in their speeches. To a flood of other questions, the Minister could only reply that great inconvenience might result from answering particular interrogatories of that kind. In the House of Lords, the Corn Importation Bill was passed with slight opposition. Lord Brougham proposed a resolution in favour of a perfectly free trade in corn, which was negatived. A resolution, moved by Lord Melbourne, in favour of a fixed duty, was also negatived by a majority of 117 to 49. Before this, however, the financial statement for the year had been made, and for awhile the corn law question was suspended for the country to recover from its astonishment at finding in the Minister of the Conservative party one of the boldest reformers of our tariff who had ever occupied the Ministerial benches. His position had only yesterday appeared one of the greatest difficulty, in which a cautious hold upon the established sources of revenue, with some well-balanced proposals for additional taxes, was all that could be expected. He had not the good fortune of Mr. Goulburn or Lord Althorp in having a surplus to dispose of. The Whig Government had bequeathed to their successors a deficit, which had been increasing from year to year, with a revenue falling off even in the face of new taxes. How was the deficit to be met? was the question which filled the mouths of public men; a question which was answered by the famous financial statement of Sir Robert Peel on the 11th of March.

After showing that the deficiency for the coming year would be little short of £2,500,000, and that this deficiency might be expected to be considerably augmented by the position of affairs in India and China, the Minister declared that he would not consent to resort to the miserable expedient of continual loans. He declared that he would not attempt to impose burdens upon the labouring classes, and that if he did, recent experience had shown that they would be defeated. In fact, the country had arrived at the limits of taxation upon articles of consumption. After ridiculing the various suggestions of people who were constantly sending him projects for taxes on pianofortes, umbrellas, and other

articles, accompanied with claims of very large percentages upon the proceeds, he acknowledged the principle laid down by financiers that increased revenue may be obtained by taking off the taxes which pressed upon industry, but declared that the first effect was always a diminution in revenue, and that time was found necessary to restore the amount. Under these circumstances, he stated what the measure was which, under a deep conviction of its necessity, he was prepared to propose, and which, he was persuaded, would benefit the country, not only in her pecuniary interests, but in her security and character. His scheme was this: he proposed, for a period to be limited, an income tax of not more than 3 per cent., from which he would exempt all incomes under £150, and in which he would include not only landed but funded property. Rising then to the height of his subject, the Minister addressed the House in a strain of lofty appeal to great principles, which constitutes one of the most striking passages in his printed speeches. "There are," he said, "occasions when a Minister of the Crown may, consistently with honour and with good policy, pause before he presses upon the Legislature the adoption of measures which he believes to be abstractedly right. He may have to encounter differences of opinion amongst colleagues whom he esteems and respects. He may sincerely believe it to be for the public interest that the Government, of which he is a member, should retain power, and that, therefore, he should not hazard its existence by proposing a measure which might not ultimately succeed, and thereby endanger the safety and security of his Government. He may, on comparing the consequence of exciting and agitating the country by discussion upon a measure in which he may not ultimately succeed, think it possible that there is a disadvantage in proposing that which he believes to be abstractedly right, for the evil of fruitless agitation may possibly countervail the enunciation of a right principle. But there are occasions, and this is one of them, upon which a Government can make no compromise—there are occasions, and this is one of them, upon which it is the bounden duty of a Government to give that counsel to the Legislature which it believes to be right—to undertake the responsibility of proposing those measures which it believes to be for the public advantage, and to devolve upon the Legislature the responsibility of adopting or rejecting those measures. I have performed, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, my duty. I have proposed, with the full weight and authority of the Government, that which I believe to be conducive to the public welfare. I now devolve upon you the duty, which properly belongs to you, of maturely considering and finally deciding on the adoption or rejection of the measures I propose. We live in an important era of human affairs. There may be a natural tendency to overrate the magnitude of the crisis in which we live, or those particular events with which we are ourselves conversant; but I think it is impossible to deny that the period in which our lot and the lot of our fathers has been cast—the period which has elapsed since the first outbreak of the first

French revolution—has been one of the most memorable periods that the history of the world will afford. I am now addressing you after the duration of peace for twenty-five years. I am now exhibiting to you the financial difficulties and embarrassments in which you are placed; and my confident hope and belief is, that following the example of those who preceded you, you will look those difficulties in the face, and not refuse to make similar sacrifices to those which your fathers made for the purpose of upholding the public credit. You will bear in mind that this is no casual and occasional difficulty. You will bear in mind that there are indications amongst all the upper classes of society of increased comfort and enjoyment—of increased prosperity and wealth—and that, concurrently with these indications, there exists a mighty evil which has been growing up for the last seven years, and which you are now called upon to meet. If you have, as I believe you have, the fortitude and constancy of which you have been set the example, you will not consent with folded arms to view the annual growth of this mighty evil. You will not reconcile it to your consciences to hope for relief from diminished taxation. You will not adopt the miserable expedient of adding, during peace, and in the midst of these indications of wealth and of increasing prosperity, to the burdens which posterity will be called upon to bear. You will not permit this evil to gain such gigantic growth as ultimately to place it far beyond your power to check or control. If you do permit this evil to continue, you must expect the severe but just judgment of a reflecting and retrospective posterity. Your conduct will be contrasted with that of your fathers, under difficulties infinitely less pressing than theirs. Your conduct will be contrasted with that of your fathers, who, with a mutiny at the Nore, a rebellion in Ireland, and disaster abroad, yet submitted, with buoyant vigour and universal applause (with the funds as low as 52), to a property tax of ten per cent. I believe that you will not subject yourselves to an injurious or an unworthy contract. It is my firm belief that you will feel the necessity of preserving inviolate the public credit—that you will not throw away the means of maintaining the public credit by reducing in the most legitimate manner the burden of the public debt. My confident hope and belief is, that you will prove yourselves worthy of your mission—of your mission as the representatives of a mighty people; and that you will not tarnish the fame which it is your duty to cherish as the most glorious inheritance; that you will not impair the character for fortitude, for good faith, which, in proportion as the empire of opinion supersedes and predominates over the empire of physical force, constitutes for every people, but above all for the people of England, the main instrument by which to repel hostile aggressions, and maintain extended empire."

There is no reason to doubt that the Minister honestly believed that the income tax would be only a temporary measure. He had avowed his faith in the doctrines of the free-traders on the elasticity of taxes under remis-

sion. The country had already seen the marvellous effects of taking off excise duties, in setting free industry, and so increasing the amount derived from other taxed articles; and they had just had an evidence of the truth of the converse of that maxim in the unproductiveness of the additional rates imposed by Sir Francis Baring. It was, at all events, not the part of the free-traders to deny that the remissions of taxation which the income tax rendered possible would soon be made up, and thus the abolition of the income tax made easy. Subsequent events, indeed, have shown that those calculations were well founded; but the Minister forgot that the elasticity of the national expenditure is at least equal to that of the national income. Once imposed, the income tax was little likely to be parted with by future Chancellors of the Exchequer. If the expenditure of the country had remained at the point at which it stood in 1843, there would soon have been no difficulty in dispensing with this great burthen on the industrious classes. This was all the Minister promised, and the subsequent enormous increase in the estimates cannot fairly be regarded as showing the Premier's scheme to be erroneous.

It is curious, however, that this very temporary character which Sir Robert Peel put forth as the best recommendation of his scheme afforded one of the most powerful arguments against the tax. A complaint was immediately made against the injustice of taxing precarious and permanent incomes—the earnings of the clerk or professional man, which may cease at any moment, or the income of the annuitant, or holder of a terminable annuity—and the revenue of the landed proprietor or fundholder at the same rate. The supporters of the tax contended that this objection was fallacious, because where the income was precarious, the tax would be equally precarious, and would, in fact, exist only as long as the income existed. These two schools of reasoners have not yet come to agreement upon this point, very able writers even among political economists having adopted each view; but among the most thorough defenders of the tax there were none who could deny that their reasoning applied only to a permanent impost; and that a man who invested in a permanent security ought not to be allowed, as he was, to pay a great deal less per annum in proportion to his property than others who had invested in annuities or other precarious securities, except on the understanding, that while the latter paid only as long as their income should last, the former should pay for ever. On Sir Robert Peel's own showing, his tax must necessarily be grossly partial in its operation in favour of the landowner, the fundholder, and all other holders of settled incomes. In other respects, it could not be denied that the tax was extremely unfair. Unlike some indirect taxes, which reach all classes, it weighed and still weighs most heavily on the struggling industrious and most responsible portion of the population, to the almost complete exemption of the idle and profligate. In practice it has been found impossible to collect it with any approach to equality. Few persons, unless housekeepers, however large

their incomes, find much difficulty in escaping from its operation. Add to this the vast injury to the morals of the people in the almost universal practice of making false returns, which has grown out of the fact that the Government are, in most cases, compelled to depend entirely on the consciences of the payers for their knowledge of the amount of their incomes. Many of these evils were pointed out at the time, and considerable opposition was manifested; but the splendour of the financial scheme, which was based upon the new impost, and the apparent impossibility of separating it from it, reconciled even some of the more advanced Liberal journals, which did not fail to sneer at the theorists who attempted to draw a distinction between incomes on the ground of the sources from which they were derived.

Sir Robert Peel calculated that the tax would yield £3,350,000 a year, a sum which, with an addition to the spirit duties in Ireland, and an export duty of 4s. on coals, would not only cover the existing deficiency, but enable him to remit indirect taxes to the amount of £1,200,000. The sliding scale had brought little credit to the Minister, and the income tax was in its nature an unpopular measure; but the proposal to reduce the custom duties on 750 out of the 1,200 articles in the tariff—to remove prohibitions altogether (in itself a vast concession to free trade doctrines)—to reduce the duties on raw materials of manufactures to five per cent. or less—to keep the duties on articles partially manufactured under twelve per cent., and on articles wholly manufactured under twenty per cent., was a scheme which excited general admiration. The measure was, indeed, contested by the Whig Opposition at every stage. The preliminary resolutions were debated for eight nights. There were many of Sir Robert Peel's old supporters who looked on the financial plan with distrust, as being founded, in a great measure, avowedly on those principles of political economy which they had been accustomed to sneer at; but, in truth, it was not unfavourable to the interests of their party. We have already seen that the new tax—at least, if a temporary one—was calculated to impose a far greater burden upon the manufacturing and moneyed class than upon the landowners; in fact, by exempting incomes under £150 a year, and assessing land only upon its net rental, the burden was imposed almost entirely upon that middle class which was the especial object of the dislike of Tories of the more advanced kind. At the same time, by cheapening articles of general consumption, the Minister did something towards securing popularity among the working classes, who, as exemplified in the Chartist agitation, were not always disposed to take part against the selfish schemes of the landowners. Sir James Graham, in his speech on the budget, said that the object of the Government was gradually to reduce the price of all articles of first necessity, and added, "I am persuaded that the working classes clearly understand this, and that it is a fixed and rooted belief with them that this tariff, taken in conjunction with the scheme of direct taxation, is one calculated to promote the interests of the great bulk of the community."

The weak and vacillating Whigs now saw how good a chance of popularity they had lost. They were indignant at finding that the Protectionist Minister had outwitted them by capping their timid advances towards free trade by a scheme which, while it inflicted no injury upon his party, constituted a really bold and sweeping reform of the tariff. Their pamphleteers delighted to recall the saying of Mr. Canning, that Peel was the sublime of mediocrity. They praised his many domestic virtues, his adroit talents in debate, his steady application to business, his freedom from jobbing, and his "plain habits," only to sneer at him as a "second-rate man." They said he had originated nothing except the London police; that no speech of his had ever lived beyond the day; that no sayings of his were quoted, or remembered for their wit or their wisdom; that all about him, like his person, was common-place; second-hand, "well got up." They said that the agricultural kings of Moab little thought, during the elections of 1841, when they called him to a high place to bless their wheat and their short-horns, that he would so soon take up his reduced scale and his tariff to confound their expectations, and to make them eat their own words, and to vote against their own motions. With some show of reason it was said that all the great leading measures which have been advocated and carried since he came into public life, had been opposed and mistaken by him for sources of mischief; while afterwards, ninety-nine people out of a hundred (and himself amongst them) hailed them as great advances in the paths of liberty, justice, and humanity. They taunted him with the fact that he began by opposing Mr. Horner's celebrated resolutions on the currency; and ended by himself carrying the return to cash payments; that he opposed Sir Samuel Romilly's humane attempts to simplify our criminal laws, and to mitigate their revolting severity; and then, many years later, took some hesitating steps in the same direction, but, satisfied or alarmed with a few digests, left its revolting severities untouched and unrebuked. They reminded him that he had twitted Mr. Canning, in 1827, with his inability to resist the abolition of the Test and Corporation Act, and was himself, under the compulsion of Lord John Russell, no later than the following year when Secretary of State, an example of the very inability he had denounced; that for the first twenty years of his political life he was the uncompromising opponent of Catholic Emancipation, and yet suddenly opened the sessions of 1829 with an unrestricted Emancipation Bill; that in 1826 he approved of educating the Irish Protestant and Catholic children together, and of giving them Scripture extracts as school books—in 1832 he disapproved—in 1835 he re-approved—and in 1842 he united both opinions by approving in words, and discouraging by deeds, this system; and finally, that in 1815 he defended, in 1833 he denounced, and in 1842 he imposed an income tax.

• Their taunts, however, though true enough, had little practical effect. The Income Tax Bill passed, after considerable opposition in the Commons. An amendment

proposed by Lord John Russell was rejected by a vote of 302 to 202, and another amendment, proposing the reading of the Bill on that day six months, having been thrown out on the 18th of April by a vote of 235 to 188, the third reading was carried by a majority of 130 on the 30th of May. No debate took place in the Lords until the third reading, when the Bill passed by a majority of 71.

The amended copy of the proposed tariff was laid on the table of the House of Commons on the 5th of May; and its details explained by the Premier in a speech which served to bring out still more strongly the anomalous position in which he was placed. His speech was a long elaborate statement distinguished for its excellent temper, its clearness, and, above all, by its singularity as delivered by the Conservative leader. He went over all the sections of his subject, showing how the removal of prohibitions would benefit everybody; how the reduction of duties on raw materials would stimulate trade; how the diminished duties on provisions would make living cheaper for all; and how the lesser protection to manufactures would injure none. For the agricultural interest he had to offer cheap foreign clover seeds. The duties on wood came next. In consequence of the high duties on foreign wood entered for home consumption, it had been frequently imported into the country, then re-exported to France and Germany, and finally re-imported as furniture on a payment of 20 per cent. It was not surprising that the cabinet trade of this country had, under these circumstances, been transferred to Germany and France. The reduction of the duties on dye-woods and ores was also calculated to be of great benefit to manufacturers. The high duty on copper ores had been found to operate in such a manner that copper smelted in bond in this country could not be used here; while copper was actually imported which had been smelted in England and France with our own fuel. Similar advantages were anticipated from the reduced duties on oils, which are extensively used in our manufactures. While one of the chief—whale oil—had risen from £60 or £70 a tun in a few years to £95, or even £111 a tun, in the United States it could be procured for similar purposes at 3s. or 4s. Coming to timber, the Minister reminded the House of the celebrated dictum of Mr. Deacon Hume, that we have abundance of untaxed coal, abundance of untaxed iron, and that we only wanted abundance of untaxed wood, in order to be provided cheaply with the three great primary raw materials of employment and necessary consumption. Entering into further details, he said that he found beef, fresh or slightly salted, was absolutely prohibited; he proposed to admit it at 8s. per cwt. Lard, an important article in the consumption of the poor, and for manufacturing purposes, would be admitted at 2s. per cwt., instead of 8s.; salt beef at 8s., instead of 12s.; hams at 14s. per cwt., instead of 28s.; herrings—a fish in which the poor were most interested—would be admitted at 10s. the barrel, instead of 20s. In the true spirit of free trade, he answered those who anticipated injury to our own herring fisheries from this charge by

asking why the inhabitants of the north of Scotland should not be able to compete with the Norwegians for the supply of Ireland? adding—"I say, reduce the duty on timber, enable the fisherman to build a better boat, in order that he may go further to sea and navigate in rougher weather, and then he will be able to compete with foreign fishermen. He has as much industry, as great skill, and by exposing him to a certain amount of competition, you apply a stimulus to greater exertion than is now called for from him." In the same way he showed the effect of the reduction on vegetables. The Government had come to the conclusion

Sir Robert caused some merriment by producing a letter from a smuggler—"not addressed," he said, "to myself, of course," but a *bonâ-fide* letter written by a man of large means and capital in regular intercourse with London. It was dated December, 1841. After offering his services on the goods for a certain port, the Premier read the conclusion of the writer as follows: "I am able to forward to you every week blondes and laces (I mean articles manufactured at Lille, Arras, Caen, Chantilly, &c.), at a very low premium, by the *indirect channel*. The goods would be delivered in London the same week of the reception . . . for which articles prices



JOHN BRIGHT, ESQ., M.P.

that the duty on hops was extravagant, and it was to be reduced from £8 4s. to £4 10s. He also devoted a considerable portion of his statement to convincing those who feared the reduction of the duties on live cattle, that their anticipations were groundless. He told his agricultural friends that it was from Holstein alone that any great supplies of cattle could be brought; and that they might be certain that not a single ox, fat or lean, would cross the Bay of Biscay. Inquiries had taught him that the trade of feeding lean cattle had become quite profitless, except for the sake of the manure. Lean cattle from the Continent would mend that. In proof that high duties did not protect the home manufacturer,

would have to be determined, but certainly a great deal under your Custom House duties." "Is it not clear," asked the Minister, triumphantly, "that it would be more beneficial to the domestic manufacturer that he should know the extent of the competition to which he is subjected; that he should be aware of it, and not be exposed to an illicit, unseen competition, against which he can take no precautions?"

He then told the House that the case of the straw-plait manufacturers had called for the serious attention of the Government, as one in which they had found it impossible to resist the appeal for protection at the expense of the consumer. "They were," he said, mostly women

and children living in country districts, and on representations made on their behalf, the duty had been increased in the amended tariff from 5s. to 7s. 6d. in the pound; "but I wish," he continued, "to convince them of the delusiveness of that security they ask. At present the duty on the raw material in straw, to be used in plaiting, is not more than 1d. per pound; the duty on the manufactured article is the extravagant one of 17s. 6d. per pound. It is so light an article, that there are great facilities for introducing it. I give the House a practical proof of the manner of introducing it. There is the straw introduced for manufacture, and this is subjected only to 1d. per pound on its introduction." Sir Robert Peel here exhibited a small bundle of bleached and cut straw, about eight inches in length, and of the thickness of a man's wrist, neatly bound up, such as is seen in the straw bonnet shop-windows. "In this straw," he continued, "intended to be introduced at such a very low rate of duty, is enclosed the article which is charged on its admission with a duty of 17s. 6d. a pound. Now observe," and with these words he tore the binding from one end of the bundle of straw, and from the centre of it took out a neat small roll of straw-plait, about the thickness of the thumb, which had been concealed inside the bundle, a proceeding which caused some surprise and mirth in the House. Such, he said, were the grounds of the change which it was his intention to carry through; adding, "I know that many gentlemen who are strong advocates for free trade may consider that I have not gone far enough. I believe that on the general principle of free trade there is now no great difference of opinion, and that all agree in the general rule that we should purchase in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest." Loud cheers from the opposition benches here interrupted him. Turning in the direction of the cheerers, he said, "I know the meaning of that cheer. I do not now wish to raise a discussion on the corn laws or the sugar duties. I have stated the grounds, on more than one occasion, why I consider these exceptions to the general rule, and I will not go into the question now. I know that I may be met with the complaints of gentlemen opposite of the limited extent to which I have applied the general principle to which I have adverted to these important articles. I thought after the best consideration I could give to the subject that if I proposed a greater change in the corn laws than that which I submitted to the consideration of the House, I should only aggravate the distresses of the country, and only increase the alarm which prevailed among important interests. I think that I have proposed, and the Legislature has sanctioned, as great a change in the corn laws as was prudent, considering the engagements existing between landlord and tenant, and also the large amount of capital which has been applied to the cultivation of the soil. Under these circumstances, I think that we have made as great a change as was consistent with the nature of the subject." In conclusion, he cited the wise and just words of Mr. Huskisson in 1825, against the needless application of new principles. He and his colleagues, he said, "had removed prohibi-

tions, reduced duties, balanced between conflicting interests, and endeavoured to make their measures as effective as possible, with as small an amount of individual suffering as was compatible with regard to the public good. He trusted that their measure would act as an example to the whole of Europe, showing that, in the midst of financial difficulties, they were not afraid to attempt a reduction of the import duties, looking to other means to meet those difficulties. Those countries would soon find how profitless was the expense of establishments to keep down the smuggler in the support of their high duties. Comparisons would be drawn between England and the countries where monopolies exist—as Spain, where the system existed in perfection; and there they would see eternal contests, and yet no revenue. It was his belief that Russia would shortly be compelled by the loss of revenue to abandon her attempts to force manufactures. The example of England would insure the general application of just principles, with benefit to herself and to those who were wise enough to follow."

The free trade journals did not fail to observe that what they called "this remarkable lecture on free trade, protection, and smuggling, delivered from the Tory Treasury bench," was wound up by the avowal that the principles of free trade were now beyond a question, and that the rule to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest was the only valid theory of commerce. In fact, that rule means only that the merchant should be at liberty to take commodities from where they are cheap, that is, abundant, to dispose of them where they are scarce and dear, and, of course, by so doing, to equalise prices to the ultimate benefit of consumers. In the House some opposition was offered to the reduction of duties on pigs, apples, butter, fish, and other articles; but the Government proposals were in every case affirmed by large majorities. The opposition, however, raised the old question of the sugar duties which had been omitted from the list of changes. The Tariff Bill passed the Commons amid some enthusiastic signs on the 28th of June. The best proof of the philanthropic intentions of the Minister was the dissatisfaction evinced by the more thorough-going of his own party. In the House of Lords, Earl Stanhope said the Government had, by this new tariff, thrown open the floodgates of a torrent, which they would find it utterly impossible to stem. He taunted the Minister with having used arguments which appeared to have been taken from one of the "Anti-Corn-Law Circulars," or some speech of the Anti-Corn-Law League, and pronounced his scheme "an *ignis fatuus*, which would destroy the political power of the man who introduced it." Great meetings were held in Kent, convened by the high sheriff of the county, to denounce the changes in the duty on hops; and similar great meetings were held in other counties, at which resolutions strongly condemnatory of the new tariff, the corn bill, and the income tax, were passed.

The Corn-Law Leaguers were grateful for the great impetus given by the Minister to free trade principles, but were not to be turned aside from the task they had undertaken. Free trade in corn—the great reform

which the country was beginning to understand—was still far off, but the question was never for a moment allowed to rest. Early in the year a droll circumstance, related in the papers, served to remind the people still more forcibly of the Premier's embarrassments on this point. A Lancashire manufacturer had forwarded to the Minister, as a New Year's present, a beautiful specimen of printed velveteens, produced at the Ancoats Vale works, the fabric being entirely of cotton, but so ingeniously dressed as to appear like silk. Sir Robert immediately acknowledged the gift in the following letter to the giver, dated Drayton Manor:—"Sir,—I am much obliged by your kind attention in sending a specimen of the beautiful manufacture which accompanied your letter. Lady Peel admires it so much, that she will convert one of the pieces into a cloak for her own wearing. The other I will apply to my own use."

Not many days, however, had elapsed ere the Minister, who evidently had not examined the present which he had received with so much enthusiasm, made the alarming discovery that the velveteen had been converted into a vehicle of political ideas. It appeared that the design represented "a stalk or ear of wheat, grouped, or rather thrown together very tastefully, with a small scroll peeping from beneath, and bearing the fatal word, 'Free.'" The dismay of the Minister, on finding his acceptance of this present mentioned in the Manchester papers as a political fact, caused some merriment. He returned the velveteen at once to the giver, with a note, stating that he was "not aware that the specimen of manufacture, which his correspondent had requested him to accept, bore any allusion to matters which were the subject of public controversy." "Peel's velveteens" were seized upon by the satirists of the day as a text for ridicule. They associated the "Velveteen Plot" with the Gunpowder Plot and the Rye House Plot of other days. *Punch* declared that Lady Peel, like a good wife, had ordered her cloak to be made of the objectionable stuff, simply because she knew that Sir Robert had at the last election "used a cloak with some sort of corn law device upon it, and because she could do no better than follow the example of a beloved husband;" and added, "Great, indeed, would have been the triumph of the League, if the Minister had donned the insidious trousers, and taken his seat in them in the House of Commons."

The question of the sugar duties was not allowed to rest. The West India interest strongly urged that now slavery was abolished in the British possessions, they ought not to be expected to compete with the slave-grown sugar of other countries. On the other hand, it was contended that the system of slavery was not really any cheaper than that of paid service, forced labour being necessarily stupid and inefficient. It was shown that sugar had become with the poor almost a necessary of life, and it was argued that the planters' cry was but the old selfish cry for protection of particular interests of which we had so many examples. Honest advocates of the abolition of slavery certainly took a different view; but on the whole free traders, not behind them in their love

of liberty, and hatred of the slavery system, were of opinion that the attempt to combat slavery by differential duties was not only futile, but productive of much mischief. These conflicting arguments were heard again and again in Parliament, but as yet they brought no change. On the 3rd of June the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that the Government was unable to reduce the sugar duties that year. On the whole, though the distress was still terrible, the Government measures were a success, and the people looked forward to some relief from the new laws which came into operation in October; while on the eve of the prorogation, Sir Robert Peel, with some degree of exultation, asked those who blamed the Government for the distress of the people, "if the evils under which the country suffered were to be remedied by the removal of restrictions, had they not done more to that end during the past session than any other administration had effected for many years?"

CHAPTER LVIII.

The Session of 1843—Assassination of Mr. Drummond, Secretary of Sir Robert Peel—Prejudice against the League—Attack of the *Quarterly Review* on the Anti-Corn-Law Agitators—The Speeches of the League Orators condemned in the House of Lords—Charge of Sir Robert Peel against Mr. Cobden of encouraging Assassination—Excited Scene in the Commons—Mr. Cobden's Explanation—Mr. Villiers' Motion Renewed—Uproar in the House—Operations of the League—Meetings at Drury Lane Theatre—Mr. Kohl's Description of the League—Meetings at Covent Garden Theatre—Public Adhesion of the Marquis of Westminster to the League—Progress in the Agricultural Districts—The League's Freehold Land Scheme—The *Times*' Recognition of the League as a Great Fact—The Session of 1844—Mr. Cobden's Motion for Inquiry into Effects of Protective Duties—Mr. Villiers' Motion in 1844—Feeble Policy of Lord J. Russell—Parliamentary Progress of the League Movement.

THE year 1843 opened amid gloom and depression. The newspapers published the fact that the revenue for the quarter ending on the 6th of January, as compared with the corresponding quarter of the previous year, had decreased no less than £940,062, occasioned mainly by diminished consumption of articles used by the industrial classes of the community; and the *Times* remarked, "It appears to us very clear, whatever our free-trade friends may say, that any alteration which may be made in the corn laws ought not to be made irrespective of financial considerations: we cannot at these times afford to throw away revenue." In the same paper appeared a statement that flour was 30 per cent. dearer in London than in Paris. The Queen opened Parliament on the 2nd of February, and the speech delivered from the throne regretted the diminished receipts from some of the ordinary sources of revenue, and feared that it must, in part, be attributed to the reduced consumption of many articles caused by that depression of the manufacturing industry of the country which had so long prevailed, and which Her Majesty had so deeply lamented. But it suggested no measure of relief for the people.

A debate which took place shortly afterwards was characterised by a memorable scene. In the month of January, 1843, Mr. Edward Drummond, the private secretary of Sir Robert Peel, had been shot in the street at Charing Cross, by an assassin, named

M'Naughten. The unfortunate gentleman died of the wound, and the wildest rumours agitated the town as to the motive which had prompted the deed. Many asserted that it was a political one. M'Naughten had been seen loitering in Whitehall Gardens, and had followed his victim from Sir Robert Peel's residence in that locality. It was at once rumoured that the Prime Minister was the intended victim. M'Naughten had come from Glasgow, and it was said that when the Queen was in Scotland, Sir Robert Peel invariably rode in the royal carriage, and Mr. Drummond in Sir Robert's own carriage. If this was true, it was remarked, the assassin's confidence would have been complete when he saw Mr. Drummond actually leave the house of Sir Robert Peel. Although the assassin was afterwards proved to be insane, the fact, coupled with the political excitement of the time, made a painful impression upon the minds of public men.

In the eyes of the Conservatives the League was now the great cause of the political ferment which had spread throughout the land. In the *Quarterly Review* for December, a long and elaborate indictment had been published against the body, and all who were in any way connected with them, in which it was attempted to show that the means by which the League sought to attain their objects were of the worst kind. The writer of that article hinted that the League's system of levying money for the avowed purpose of forcing Parliament to alter the law of the land was criminally punishable. Jacobinism, it told its readers, was "a bold-faced villain, who avowed his real designs, and was therefore more easily dealt with than these hypocritical associations, which, grown, like Satan, 'wiser than of yore,' assumed more cautious forms and more plausible pretexts in pursuit of the same ultimate object. A Mr. Bailey had stated, at one of the League meetings, that he had heard of a gentleman, who, in private company, had said that if one hundred persons cast lots, and the lot should fall upon him, he would take the lot to deprive Sir Robert Peel of life." The teller of this injudicious anecdote added, that "he felt convinced that no such attempt ought to be made under any pretence whatever; but he was persuaded of this, that when Sir Robert Peel went to his grave, there would be but few to shed one tear over it." The speaker was a minister of the Gospel, and there could be no doubt that he intended his anecdote only as an illustration of the frenzy to which some persons had been wrought by the political circumstances of the time; but the fact circulated by the great Tory organs, together with all the most violent and excited passages which could be found in the innumerable speeches delivered at League meetings, and in the pamphlets and other publications of that body, tended to create a vague horror of the Leaguers in the minds of that large class who read only writers on that side which accords with their own views. The terrible Manchester men, with their big and little loaf, their Anti-Bread-Tax Journal, their horrible anecdotes of starvation, their public burnings of corn-bills and offices of unpopular Ministers, haunted their dreams. The Minister himself was probably not altogether free from this antipathy towards the Anti-Corn-

Law-agitators, and on several occasions had replied to Mr. Cobden in Parliament in a tone and manner which savoured of the bitterness of his party towards them.

When the rumours of Mr. Drummond having been mistaken for Sir Robert Peel were spread abroad, it was impossible for zealous Conservatives to forget these things. If the assassin M'Naughten was mad, he was certainly mad about politics; one of the first utterances of his insane ravings when captured having been directed against the Tories of Glasgow. One witness, indeed, swore that on his being asked if he knew the gentleman shot at, M'Naughten replied, "It is Sir Robert Peel, is it not?" The Minister's life was not considered safe, and for some time two policemen in plain clothes followed him about in the street wherever he went. In the debate on the distress of the country in the House of Lords, Lord Beaumont had said, "It was impossible to disguise from oneself the rapid growth of that monstrous giant which had risen up in the form of the Anti-Corn-Law League;" and added that, "Although Ministers might despise the absurd proclamations of that body, they would be scarcely discharging their duty, unless they checked its onward career, and crushed in the shell the dragon which threatened to blight their fields. He knew not," he said, "if some of its acts were not illegal, as some of its circulars were blasphemous." Lord Brougham followed in terms of similar reprobation, and added: "If anything could retard the progress of their doctrines, if anything could raise obstacles to the course of improvement in the laws respecting provisions, and the general laws which they most justly oppose, it would be the exaggerated statements and violence of some of those connected with their body. I cannot discharge my duty to your lordships, and to my own conscience, if I do not express the utter abhorrence and disgust with which I have noted some men—men clothed with sacred functions, though I trust unconnected with the League—who have actually in this very metropolis of a British and a Christian community, and in the middle of the nineteenth century of the Gospel of grace and peace, not scrupled to utter words to which I will not at present for obvious reasons more particularly allude; but which I abhor, detest, and scorn, as being calculated to produce fatal effects—I will not say they have produced them, but calculated to produce the taking away of innocent life. My lords, your lordships are aware that I refer to a trial which is pending, and they who have used these expressions will, I hope and trust, be called on for an explanation in the course of its proceedings; and it is only because of the pendency of the trial that I abstain from more specially referring to those reverend gentlemen's observations." No one mistook the purport of this, or doubted that it meant that M'Naughten's attempt was connected with the ill-judged language of some of the speakers at the League meetings.

On the 17th of February, the fifth night of the debate on the same subject in the Commons, Mr. Cobden rose to speak, and in the course of his address alluded to an attempt made to identify the members of the Anti-Corn-Law League with a most odious, a most horrible transaction which had lately occurred; but in the conclusion of

his speech, he said, "I tell the right honourable gentleman (Sir Robert Peel) that I, for one, care nothing for Whigs or Tories. I have said that I never will help to bring back the Whigs, but I tell him that the *whole responsibility* of the lamentable and dangerous state of the country rests with him. It ill becomes him to throw that responsibility on any one on this side. I say there never has been violence, tumult, or confusion, except at periods when there has been an excessive want of employment, and a scarcity of the necessaries of life." No outcry at these words, even among the Ministerial party, evinced that the House regarded them as overstepping the proper limits of debate. Loud cries for Mr. Bankes, the Dorsetshire landowner, who had been attacked in Mr. Cobden's speech, were the only party sounds uttered, but the Prime Minister was immediately seen to rise. It has been stated that he was "ill and harassed with public anxieties." He was certainly deeply moved by the loss of his valued and confidential friend Mr. Drummond. His countenance, it is said, indicated extreme agitation, while by gesticulations, and violently striking an empty box before him, he succeeded in obtaining the ear of the House. It was then that his audience perceived that the Minister regarded Mr. Cobden as pointing him out for the hand of the assassin.

Sir Robert Peel began by saying, "Sir, the honourable gentleman has stated here very emphatically, what he has more than once stated at the Conferences of the Anti-Corn-Law League, that he holds me *individually responsible* for the distress and suffering of the country; that he holds me personally responsible." This was pronounced with great solemnity of manner, and at the word "individually" the Premier was interrupted by a loud cheer from the Ministerial benches of a very peculiar and emphatic kind. It lasted a considerable time, and while it continued, and for some time afterwards, the House presented an appearance of extreme excitement, the members in the gallery standing up, and many of those below whispering eagerly to each other. Sir Robert then continued, "Be the consequences of those insinuations what they may, never will I be influenced by menaces to adopt a course which I consider—" But the rest of the sentence was lost in renewed shouts from the Ministerial benches.

Mr. Cobden immediately rose and said, "I did not say that I held the right honourable gentleman *personally* responsible;" but he was interrupted by shouts from the Ministerial benches of, "You did, you did!" mingled with cries of "Order!" and "Chair!" The further remark from Mr. Cobden, "I have said that I hold the right honourable gentleman responsible by virtue of his office, as the whole context of what I said was sufficient to explain," brought renewed shouts from the same quarter of "No, no," accompanied by great confusion. When Sir Robert, says a newspaper of the day, gave the signal for this new light, then, and not till then, the sense so obtained burst forth with a frantic yell, which would better have befitted a company of savages who first saw and scented their victim, than a grave and dignified assembly insulted by conduct deemed

deserving of condemnation. Sir Robert subsequently so far recovered from his excitement as to say, "I will not overstate anything. Therefore I will not say I am *certain* the honourable gentleman used the word 'personally;'" but the debate created a painful impression, which was increased by an article in the *Times* of the following day, deliberately attempting to connect Mr. Cobden with the doctrine of assassination. The friends of the Anti-Corn-Law movement, however, immediately held meetings throughout the country at which they expressed their indignation at the attempt to fix a calumny upon the man, whose arguments in favour of free trade in food were unanswered and unanswerable.

Mr. Villiers' motion was again brought forward on the 9th of May. The debate lasted for five nights, and ended in a division which, though it showed a majority of 256 against inquiry, was encouraging as evidencing an increase in the number of the free traders. The minority numbered 125. The debate was chiefly remarkable for the violence of the monopolist party. Sir Robert Peel said that the subject was exhausted, and nothing new could be adduced. "The motion of Mr. Villiers was fairly stated and proposed—there was no subterfuge involved in it. But he thought that the principle must be applied generally and universally to every article on which a duty was levied. They could not stand on the single article of corn. By the adoption of the motion, they would sound the knell of protection, and they must immediately proceed to apply the principle to practice. This would at once upset the commercial arrangements of the last year. The whole of our colonial system must be swept away without favour and without consideration."

A contemporary writer describes the uproar which took place on this occasion as exceeding anything that had been witnessed since the night of the memorable division on the Corn Bill. "When the tempest was at its height, the leaders, Sir R. Peel and Lord J. Russell, left the house, and thus freed from all restraint, the belligerents became fiercer than ever. The blood of both parties was fairly up; for nearly two hours declamation roared while reason slept; and during the vociferous display, the voice of the Speaker was little more regarded than a whisper amidst a storm." The minority, it is said, were aware that the remaining speeches, even if delivered, could not be reported, and for that and other reasons, were in their resolves so resolute, that although outvoted in some divisions, the question was just as often re-moved and seconded. At length Mr. Ross told Lord Dungannon, that if he were contented to sit till eight o'clock, he himself, and those who acted with him, would willingly sit till nine; and it was at this stage that Sir Charles Napier slyly suggested that they should divide themselves into three watches, after the fashion of a ship's crew. This arrangement would afford ease to all, excepting the Speaker, to whom he was sorry he could not afford the slightest relief. Worn out at length by the violence of their exertions, and despairing of victory, the majority yielded. On the whole, says this writer, the scene was

one of the most absurd, uproarious, and degrading to the dignity of the House that ever yet took place in Parliament.*

To the Anti-Corn-Law Leaguers there was at least the consolation of finding that scarcely a speech was delivered by the Prime Minister which did not contain some distinct recognition of the great principles of political economy, showing how completely he had, in reality, embraced those doctrines. On one occasion he remarked, "We have reserved many articles from immediate reduction, in the hope that ere long we may attain that which we consider just and beneficial to all—namely, increased facilities for our exports in return. At the same time, I am bound to say that *it is for our interest to buy cheap, whether other countries will buy cheap or no.* We have a right to exhaust all means to induce them to do justice; but if they persevere in refusing, the penalty is on us, if we do not buy in the cheapest market."

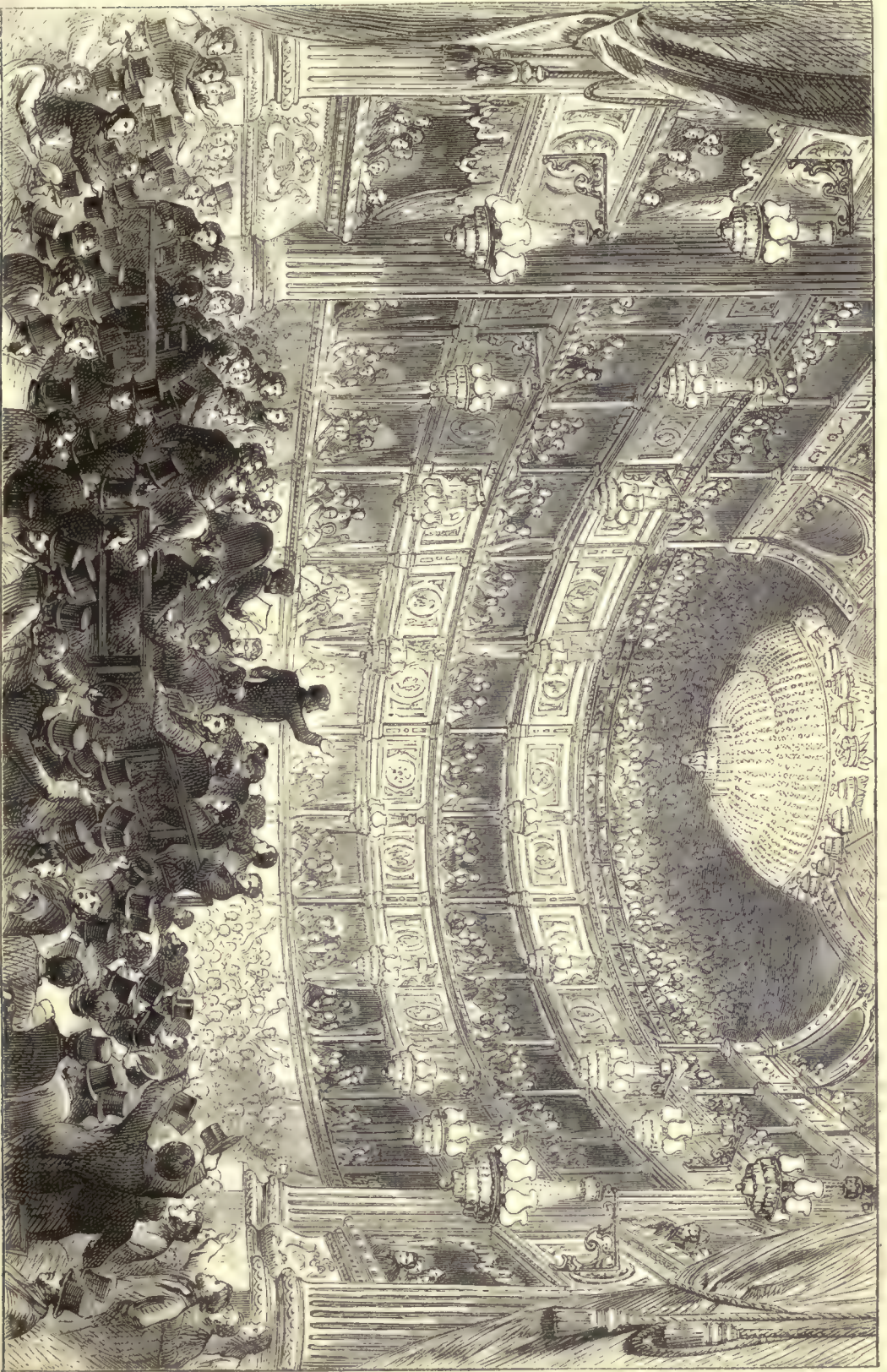
Several of the most conspicuous followers of Sir Robert Peel also in their speeches recognised the abstract principles of free trade in a way which was ominous for the continuance of the landlords' monopoly. Among the most interesting instances of this was that of Mr. Gladstone, the young statesman who was destined afterwards to play so great a part in carrying forward the reforms of his chief.

The Minister still claimed the character of the landowner's friend; and in the House of Commons, out of 658 members, 125 was the utmost number that could be considered as free traders. But the progress of the League agitation this year was immense. Five years had elapsed since the Anti-Corn-Law Association in Manchester had put forth its humble appeal for five-shilling subscriptions, and now in one single year £50,000 had been given for the objects of the association, and it was resolved to raise a further fund of £100,000. Mr. Bright had been returned for Durham in July, and already his manly and touching appeals for justice for the people had struck the ear of the House. Like his fellow-labourers, Mr. Cobden, Colonel Thompson, Mr. George Wilson, and others, he had been busy in all parts of England, addressing audiences sometimes of 10,000 persons. The League speakers had also visited Scotland, and had been everywhere received enthusiastically. The great Free Trade Hall in Manchester was finished, and had been the scene of numerous gatherings and free trade banquets, at which 7,000 or 8,000 persons had sat sometimes down together. The metropolis, however, was still behind the great provincial cities in supporting the movement; and the League, therefore, resolved on holding a series of great meetings in Drury Lane Theatre, which was engaged for one night a week during Lent. The first of these important meetings was held on the 15th of March, and was attended by so large a number of persons that the pit, boxes, and even the higher gallery were filled immediately upon the opening of the doors. The succeeding

meetings were no less crowded and enthusiastic. Attempts were made to obstruct these meetings, but without success. The use of Drury Lane Theatre had soon to be relinquished, the Earl of Glengall and the committee of shareholders having prohibited Mr. Macready, the lessee, from letting it for political purposes. The League were, in like manner, refused admittance to Exeter Hall; but they were soon enabled to obtain the use of Covent Garden Theatre, where they quickly prepared for a series of great meetings, which proved to be no less crowded and enthusiastic. Their proceedings, with the speeches of Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. Wilson, Colonel Thompson, and the other most important members of the League, were reported at great length in all the daily papers. A foreign traveller, Mr. J. G. Kohl, who visited England about this period, and was present at many of the proceedings of the League, gives, in his work entitled "Ireland, Scotland, and England," an interesting account of the movement, as it appeared to an enlightened observer, who had been brought up amidst the torpid political life and restricted liberty of a Continental state. "I could not help," he says, "asking myself whether in Germany men who attacked with such talent and energy the fundamental laws of the state, would not have been long ago shut up in some gloomy prison as conspirators and traitors, instead of being permitted to carry on their operations thus freely and boldly in the broad light of day; and, secondly, whether in Germany such men would ever have ventured to admit a stranger into all their secrets with such frank and open cordiality. I was astonished to observe how the Leaguers, all private persons, mostly merchants, manufacturers, and men of letters, conducted political business like statesmen and ministers. A talent for public business seems an innate faculty in the English. Whilst I was in the committee-room immense numbers of letters were brought in, opened, read, and answered, without a moment's delay. These letters, pouring in from all parts of the United Kingdom, were of the most various contents; some trivial, some important, but all connected with the objects of the party. Some brought news of the movements of eminent Leaguers or of their opponents, for the eye of the League is ever fixed upon the doings both of friend and enemy. Others contained pecuniary contributions from well-wishers of the cause, for each of whom the president immediately dictated an appropriate letter of thanks. Other letters related anecdotes, showing the progress of the cause, and the gradual defection of the farmers, the most resolute supporters of Peel. The League has now, by means of local associations in all parts of the kingdom, extended its operations and influence over the whole country, and attained an astonishing national importance. Its festivals, Anti-Corn-Law bazaars, Anti-Corn-Law banquets, and others of like nature, appear like great national anniversaries. Besides the acknowledged members of the League, there are numbers of important men who work with them and for them in secret. Every person who contributes £50 to the League fund has a seat and a voice in their

* Sun newspaper, May 13, 1843.

MEETING OF THE ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUE IN DUFFY LANE THEATRE.



council. They have committees of working men for the more thorough dissemination of their doctrines among the lower classes, and committees of ladies to procure the co-operation of women. They have lecturers, who are perpetually traversing the country to fan the flames of agitation in the minds of the people. These lecturers often held conferences and disputations with lecturers of the opposite party, and not unfrequently drive them in disgrace from the field. It is also the business of the travelling lecturers to keep a vigilant watch on every movement of the enemy, and acquaint the League with every circumstance likely to affect its interests. The Leaguers write direct letters to the Queen, the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, and other distinguished people, to whom, as well as to the foreign ambassadors, they send copies of those journals containing the most faithful accounts of their proceedings. Sometimes they send personal deputations to distinguished opponents, in order to tell them disagreeable truths to their faces. Nor do the Leaguers neglect the potent instrumentality of that hundred-armed Briareus, the Press. Not only do they spread their opinions through the medium of those journals favourable to them; they issue many periodicals of their own, which are exclusively devoted to the interests of the League. These contain, of course, full reports of all meetings, proceedings, and lectures against the corn laws; extracts from Anti-Corn-Law publications repeating for the thousandth time that monopoly is contrary to the order of Nature, and that the League seeks only to restore the just order of Providence; original articles headed, 'Signs of the Times,' 'Anti-Corn-Law Agitation in London,' 'Progress of the Good Work,' &c. &c.; and last, not least, poems entitled, 'Lays of the League,' advocating in various ways the cause of free trade, and satirising their opponents generally with more lengthiness than wit. Nor does the Anti-Corn-Law party omit to avail itself of the agency of those cheap little pamphlets, called 'Tracts,' which are such favourite party weapons in England. With these tiny dissertations, seldom costing more than twopence or threepence, and generally written by some well-known Anti-Corn-Law leader, such as Cobden and Sturge, the League are perpetually attacking the public, as with a bombardment of small shot. I saw three or four dozen of such publications announced at the same time by one bookseller, Mr. Gadsby. Still tinier weapons, however, are the Anti-Corn-Law wafers, consisting of short mottoes, couplets, and aphorisms of every class, grave and gay, serious and satirical, witty and unmeaning; but all bearing on the one point of monopoly and free trade. These are sometimes taken from the Bible, sometimes from the works of celebrated writers and orators, sometimes from speeches and publications of the Leaguers themselves, and sometimes are produced by the inventive ingenuity of the editor. Eighteen sheets of these wafers are sold in a pretty cover for one shilling, and each sheet contains forty mottoes. Astonishing, indeed, is the profuse expenditure of labour, ingenuity, wit, and talent, and likewise of stupidity, folly, and dulness, with which, in this wonderful Eng-

land, the smallest party operations are carried on! Even in children's books do both the Leaguers and Anti-Leaguers carry on their warfare, thus early sowing the seeds of party spirit in the minds of future generations. All the publications of the League are not only written, but printed, bound, and published at the League Rooms in Market Street, Manchester. "I went through the various rooms where these operations were carried on, until I came at last to the great League Depot, where books, pamphlets, letters, newspapers, speeches, reports, tracts, and wafers, were all piled in neat packets of every possible size and appearance, like the packets of muslin and calico in the great warehouses of Manchester."

The conclusion of the remarks of this shrewd observer are equally interesting, as showing how little, with all this gigantic movement, the task of the League appeared near completion; and how far were the most sanguine observers from anticipating the events of the next three years. "I cannot," Mr. Kohl continues, "join the sanguine expectations of the Leaguers, that Sir Robert Peel will be the last English minister who will venture to uphold monopoly. It is well-known how long such struggles generally last, and how very frequently, when the longed-for prize appears on the point of being attained, it is suddenly snatched away from that oft-deluded Tantalus, the people. The immediate aim of the Leaguers is the abolition of the corn laws, but they do not propose to stop at the attainment of this object. They will then turn the same weapons which brought down the corn laws against all other trade monopolies and Custom House regulations, first in England and then in other countries, until at length all commercial restrictions between different nations shall be totally done away with, and trade rejoice in the golden sunshine of freedom all over the world. A tempting object, but alas! a long and doubtful road."

In the report prepared by the League, it was stated that during a very considerable portion of the year there were employed in the printing, and making up of the electoral packets of tracts, upwards of 300 persons, while more than 500 other persons were employed in distributing them from house to house among the constituencies. To the Parliamentary electors alone of England and Scotland there had been distributed in this manner, of tracts and stamped publications, five millions. Besides these, there had been a large general distribution among the working classes and others, who are not electors, to the number of 3,600,000. In addition, 426,000 tracts had been stitched up with the monthly magazines and other periodicals, thus making altogether the whole number of tracts and stamped publications issued by the council during the year to amount to upwards of nine millions, or in weight more than one hundred tons. The distribution had been made in twenty-four counties, containing about 237,000 electors, and in 187 boroughs, containing 259,226 electors, making in boroughs and counties together the whole number of electors supplied 496,226. The labours of the lecturers employed during the year had been spread over fifty-nine counties in England, Wales, and Scotland, and they had delivered about 650

lectures during the year. A large number of meetings had been held during the year in the cities and boroughs, which had been attended by deputations of members of the council, exclusive of the metropolis. One hundred and forty towns had been thus visited, many of them twice and three times; and the report further stated that such had been the feeling existing in all parts of the kingdom that there was scarcely a town which had not urged its claim to be visited by a deputation from the council of the League.

The Covent Garden meeting became thenceforth an annual feature in the political events of the metropolis, and the effects of this movement in the chief city of the kingdom were seen in the election of Mr. Pattison, the free trade candidate, for the city of London. Another sign of the times was the accession to the ranks of the Anti-Corn-Law League of Mr. Samuel Jones Loyd, the wealthy banker, a conspicuous City man, and a great authority on financial matters. This gentleman addressed a letter to the council of the League in October, 1844, in which, after mentioning his reluctance to join a public body, for whose acts he could not be responsible, he said, "The time is now arrived when this must be overruled by other considerations of overwhelming importance. The great question of free trade is now fairly at issue, and the bold, manly, and effectual efforts which have been made by the League in its support command at once my admiration and my concurrence." Still more remarkable was the progress of the League in its scheme of converting the agriculturists themselves to their views. The truths which they had always maintained—that the tenant farmer had no real interest in maintaining the corn laws, the agricultural labourer, if possible, less, and that even the landed proprietor, on a far-seeing view of his interest, would be on the same side as themselves—were based upon arguments easily understood by calm reasoners, and were even beginning to make way with these classes themselves. Not a few great landowners and noblemen had openly classed themselves among their supporters. Foremost among these was Earl Fitzwilliam, who was one of the most effective speakers at Anti-Corn-Law meetings by the side of Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright. The Marquis of Westminster, in sending a donation of £500 to the League fund on New Year's day, 1844, wrote a letter to the chairman, beginning—

"SIR,—Having on a former occasion expressed to you my anxious wishes for your success in the arduous contest with monopoly in which you are engaged, I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of congratulating you upon the rapid progress you have since made in the struggle with that formidable adversary. As you have found your foe to be daring and resolute, so have your energies increased in a wonderful manner; and, in spite of opposition, you have carried the war most effectually into the enemy's strongholds. With such vigorous and sustained efforts, the victory must be yours; and my hopes of ultimate triumph, and that at no very distant date, therefore, much exceed my fears of failure."

Among the noblemen openly supporting their cause were Lord Kinnaird, Earl Ducie, the Earl of Radnor, Lord Morpeth, and Earl Spencer.

In contrast to these facts, one nobleman, as stated in the League newspaper, turned the poor labourers on his estate to work on the roads, as a punishment for having admitted one of the League writers into their miserable hovels, and answered some of his questions about their condition, which was but too manifest in their ragged clothing, their furnitureless rooms, and their unthatched roofs which let in the rain.

But the League did more than attempt to convert the country party. They determined to create a country party of their own. They had already taken up the registration of voters in the boroughs, from which they proceeded, with that practical common sense which had distinguished nearly all their movements, to inquire into the position of the country constituencies, where hitherto the landowners had held undisputed sway. The scheme which resulted from this incursion into the dominions of the enemy was developed by Mr. Cobden at a meeting in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, on the 24th of October, 1844. The Chandos clause in the Reform Act, giving the tenant-farmers votes for county members, had so strengthened the landlords' influence in the county that opposition at most of the county elections was hopeless. But Mr. Cobden showed his hearers that the counties were really more vulnerable than the small pocket boroughs. In many of these there was no increase from year to year in the number of voters—no extension of houses. The whole property belonged to a neighbouring noble, and as Mr. Cobden said, "You could no more touch the votes which he held through the property than you could touch the balance in his banker's hands." But the county constituency might be increased indefinitely, for there it required but a freehold property of the value of forty shillings a year to give a man a vote. This sum had been adopted from an ancient regulation, when money was of far greater value, and land of far less money worth than it was then; but the forty-shilling qualification existed, and was a powerful engine for the creation of voters. Up to that time it had had but little effect. The laws of England, but more especially the habits and prejudices of landowners, have always kept the land of the county in so few hands as to present an extraordinary contrast with the condition of things in all other nations of Europe. The danger of the forty-shilling clause to aristocratic influence in the county was not perceived, simply because forty-shilling freeholders were rare. But there was no reason why they should be rare. The passion for possessing freehold land is widely spread, and a few facilities offered for purchasing it would soon create a large number of small holders.

The chief difficulty in the way of this had hitherto been the great cost of transferring land. Owing to the complicated laws of real property, the land, unlike other articles, could only be bought and sold after a minute investigation into the owner's title, which

necessitated an historical account of the ownership extending back over many years. This was extremely costly; but without it, no man could be secure from being ousted from his purchase after he had duly paid his money. Deeds of transfer, too, with their lengthy legal phraseology and Government stamps, were extremely expensive, and such charges could not be sustained upon a small purchase. All this, however, the League could easily obviate. They could buy land in the lump, register its title once for all, and part it into small pieces for small buyers. "It is the custom," said Mr. Cobden in explaining his scheme, "for many to put their savings into the savings banks. I believe there are fourteen or fifteen millions or more so deposited. I would not say a word to lessen the confidence in that security; but I say there is no investment so secure as the freehold of the earth, and it is the only investment that gives a vote along with the property. We come then to this. It costs a man nothing to have a vote for the county. He buys his property; sixty pounds for a cottage is given—thirty or forty pounds in many of the neighbouring towns will do it. He has then the property to sell when he wants it, and he has his vote into the bargain. Sometimes a parent wishing to teach a son to be economical and saving, gives him a set of nest-eggs in a savings bank; I say to such a parent, Make your son, at twenty-one, a freeholder. It is an act of duty, for you make him thereby an independent freeman, and put it in his power to defend himself and his children from political oppression; and you make that man with £60 an equal in the polling-booth to Mr. Scarisbrick, with his eleven miles in extent of territory, or to Mr. Egerton. This," remarked Mr. Cobden, "must be done," and it was done. The Conservative party sneered at the Manchester men's proposition of serving land over a counter, like calico, by the yard; but the movement soon began to tell upon elections, and to alarm the great landed proprietors. They had been long engaged in multiplying voters on their estates, under the Chandos clause, making their farmers take their sons, brothers, and nephews to the register—making them qualify as many as the rent of the land would cover ever since the Reform Bill. The means, therefore, could not be complained of. The law of the land had placed the possession of the county franchise within the reach of all working men earning good wages, or willing to practise a little self-denial, and they could hardly be blamed for seeking to have a voice in the election of their representatives by means so legitimate. That movement has continued to the present time, and has resulted in benefits to the people far beyond the mere vote which the land confers. Nor have the old opponents of the free traders been able to devise any means of counteracting it other than that of imitating their policy. We have long had "Conservative" as well as "Liberal" freehold land societies; but it is manifest that the former, instead of counteracting, must really in the end serve the same purpose as the original schemes. The prejudices of primogeniture, of Toryism generally, are almost inseparable from large

properties. Tory forty-shilling freeholders may be created to-day; but aristocratic selfishness is a plant which cannot be grown on strips of land worth only £20 each. Sooner or later the possessor of the small parcel, or his descendant, or transferee, must necessarily share the sympathies of the humbler class to which he belongs.

Not the least significant effect of the striking progress of the League was the appearance of an article in the *Times* newspaper, of the 18th of November, 1843, in which, although sneering, as was the wont of that journal, at "gregarious collections of cant and cotton men," the writer announced the League as "a great fact." "It would be foolish," he continued, "nay, rash, to deny its importance. It is a great fact that there should have been created in the homesteads of our manufactures a confederacy devoted to the agitation of one political question, persevering at it year after year, shrinking from no trouble, dismayed by no danger, making light of every obstacle. It demonstrates the hardy strength of purpose—the indomitable will—by which Englishmen, working together for a great object, are armed and animated. . . . These are facts important and worthy of consideration. *No moralist can disregard them; no politician can sneer at them; no statesman can undervalue them. He who collects opinions must chronicle them. He who frames laws must to some extent consult them.* It matters not that you tell us, as you may tell us with truth, that the League has another character, and other objects, than those which it now professes. The League may be a hypocrite, a great deceiver, a huge Trojan horse of sedition. Be it so. But we answer—the League exists. We ask, tell us this: Who created the League? Who found the ribs and planks of this '*infandum monstrum*?' Who filled it with armed men, and introduced its perilous presence within the walls of the constitution? We answer, Experience set at nought, advice disregarded, warnings neglected. These brought the League into existence—these gave it power, and motion, and vital energy. These gave it an easy and unresisted ingress into the very sanctuaries of our domestic life. A new power has arisen in the State; and maids and matrons flock to theatres, as though it were but a new 'translation from the French.'" When such was the manifestly reluctant view of the *Times*, many thought that the triumph of the League was now not far distant.

The year 1844 brought little progress to the free traders in Parliament. The members of the House of Commons had been elected in 1841, in the teeth of the free trade cry raised by the Whigs, and before the League had made its power felt in the elections. Unless the Minister were compelled to dissolve Parliament, they were irremovable for four years longer, and could safely wait. Parliament met on the 1st of February. The Queen's speech congratulated the country on the improved condition of the trade and manufactures of the country, and the increased demand for labour, from which it was easily prognosticated that no further concessions were intended that session. Sir Robert Peel declared that the Government "did not contemplate and had never con-

templated any change in the existing corn laws." At recent public meetings influential members of the Tory party had openly threatened the Minister with expulsion, unless he maintained those laws for their benefit—a fact which drew from Mr. Villiers the remark that he regretted that the Prime Minister had not "the spirit to turn round upon these people, and show them their utter helplessness without him, their utter inability to administer, without him, the government upon their own system." Indeed, it began now to be assumed by all persons favourable to free trade, that the Minister's opinions were really far in advance of his own party, and that he needed only a favourable opportunity to declare himself openly at variance with their views. The great meetings at Covent Garden Theatre, immediately before the opening of Parliament, kept the subject before the public.

On the 11th of March the Earl of Radnor presented a petition adopted at a great meeting of inhabitants of the county of Somerset, which led to a long debate, in the course of which the Duke of Wellington earnestly recommended their lordships to leave the Corn Law as it was, and to continue to maintain the system which it was the object of that law to carry into effect; and the Duke of Richmond declared that he was surprised that any doubt could exist that "the farmers were, almost to a man, hostile to the delusions of free trade." On the following evening Mr. Cobden brought forward a motion to inquire into the effects of protective duties on the interests of the tenant-farmers and labourers of the country, promising that he would not bring forward a single witness who should not be a tenant-farmer or a landed proprietor; but the debate concluded with a division which negatived the motion by 244 votes to 153.

On the 17th of March, a few nights after Mr. Cobden's motion, Mr. Miles brought forward a motion for relief to the agricultural interest in the reduction or remission of taxation. He complained that there had been an importation of wheat during the last thirty-two months seven or eight times greater in amount than in the thirty-six months immediately subsequent to the introduction of the corn law of 1828. The abundance of meat in Leadenhall, Smithfield, and Newgate markets, through the importation of foreign cattle, was also made a subject of reproach against the Ministry, and he told the House, as the spokesman of the agricultural party, "that they had no confidence in the measures which the Government proposed." They thought that anything would be better than their present position. They saw that the tariff which was passed three years ago was now going to be revised again, and that the shield of protection which was thrown over some of the productions of their industry was about to be removed still further from them. Under such circumstances they could not refrain from asking themselves what there was to prevent the corn laws going next? Mr. Disraeli then, in a strain of sarcasm which is stated to have elicited cheers and laughter from the House, proceeded to assail the consistency of the Premier, and the tone in which he

rebuked the mutinous and rebellious members of his party. He believed (he said) protection to be in the same condition now as Protestantism had been in 1828, and he, who honoured genius, would rather see the abolition of all protection proposed by Mr. Cobden than by any right honourable gentleman or by any noble lord on either side of the House. It might be necessary, before such an abolition was accomplished, for the Premier to dissolve the Parliament for the benefit of the party which he had betrayed, and to appeal to the country, which universally mistrusted him. His solemn and deliberate conviction was that a Conservative Government was an organised hypocrisy.

Progress was again shown in a speech of Lord John Russell in the debate on the condition of the people on the 26th of May. Still clinging to his idea of a fixed duty, he said, "If I had a proposition to make, it would not be the 8s. duty which was proposed in 1841." An exclamation of "How much, then?" from Sir James Graham drew forth the further remark—"No one, I suppose, would propose any duty that would be less than 4s.; and 4s., 5s., or 6s., if I had a proposition to make, would be the duty that I should propose." The awkward anomalies of Sir Robert Peel's position were the frequent subject of the attacks of his enemies at this time; but the country felt that there was a littleness in the Whig leader's paltry and vacillating style of dealing with a great question, beside which, at least, the position of the Minister exhibited a favourable contrast.

Mr. Villiers' annual motion, brought forward on the 25th of June, was scarcely more successful than that of Mr. Cobden. Lord John Russell still harped upon his fixed idea of a fixed duty. In his view the country suffered not from the Corn Law, but only from the form in which it was administered. He said he was not prepared to say either that the Corn Law should be at once abolished, or that the existing law should be maintained. "There were inherent vices in the present system, which indicated its premature decay; and when Mr. Gladstone appealed to the last two years, he merely proved that the present Government, instead of being wiser, had only enjoyed much better weather than their predecessors. Would the existing Corn Law stand two successive bad harvests? It violated the commercial principle, while a fixed duty, whatever might be its amount—six, eight, or ten shillings—enabled the merchant to make his calculations with certainty. But he apprehended that a sudden repeal of the corn laws would cause panic, affect the employment of capital in agriculture; and lead to a greater importation than was consistent either with the profits of the importing merchant or the security of the home cultivator. The only portion of the proposition of the Anti-Corn-Law League which had the slightest claim to originality was the immediate abolition; all their other arguments had been anticipated by the masters of the science—Adam Smith, Ricardo, or such statesmen as Mr. Huskisson or Lord Grenville, who, however, guarded their views by great caution as to the mode of arriving at their accomplishment. He regretted that he

could take no part in the present motion, and heartily wished that some compromise could be effected which might have the effect of subduing agitation ;" adding, "If trade and commerce flourished, the landed interest need not be afraid of decay. The better way would be to revise the whole system of our protective duties, instead of dealing in perpetual harangues against the corn laws, the maintenance of which was more desired by the farmers than by the landlords themselves. But he could see no end to agitation, so long as the Government were determined to maintain the existing law."

While such was the feeble policy of the leader of that Whig party which had set up a claim to a sort of monopoly of free trade principles, it was no wonder that the country began to look for relief to the Minister who had introduced the tariff of 1842; but Sir Robert Peel as yet moved too slowly to rouse the enthusiasm in his favour of the Anti-Corn-Law League. He began his remarks with a paltry joke upon the recent scene of those great meetings of which his followers in their hearts well knew the importance. They had, he said, been that evening "engaged for the benefit of the company which usually performed at Covent Garden Theatre." During the greater part of the performance (he added) the front rank of the Opposition benches had been deserted, their usual occupants absent, perhaps from a lively recollection of the assistance given by the members of the Anti-Corn-Law League the other night at "my benefit." He then went on with the old vague allusions to the peculiar special burdens on agriculture which he had so often refused to define, and declared again that the agriculture of the country was entitled to protection from reasons both of justice and policy. "There were not (he continued) ten reflecting men out of the Anti-Corn-Law League, who did not believe that a sudden withdrawal of protection, whether it were given to domestic or colonial produce, would cause great confusion and embarrassment. In the artificial state of society in which we lived, we could not act on mere abstract philosophical maxims, which, isolated, he could not contest; they must look to the circumstances under which we have grown up, and the interests involved. Ireland, dependent on England for a market for her agricultural produce, was a case in point. He was not prepared to alter the Corn Law of 1842, and did not contemplate it. Seeing that Lord John Russell had avowed himself a consistent friend to protection, and was opposed to total repeal, he thought he was somewhat squeamish in flying from his difficulty, and declining to vote against the motion. As to the Corn Law, the Government did not intend to alter it, or diminish the amount of protection afforded to agriculture."

On the division the numbers for the motion were 124, and against it, 330. On the whole, the cause of free trade made but small progress in Parliament in this year, though out of doors the agitation was carried on with ever-increasing vigour. As regards Mr. Villiers' motion, the progress made was shown principally in the decrease of the majority against it. In 1842, when he first put the question of total repeal on issue before the House, he had 92 votes, and 395 against him; in 1843, he

had 125 votes, and 381 against him; in 1844, 124 votes, and 330 against him. He was out voted in 1842 by 303; in 1843, by 256; and in 1844, by 206. "A reduction of that numerical strength," says a contemporary writer, "from 395 to 330, and the increase of the opponent force from 92 to 124, was something hopeful in a Peel parliament, strongly pledged, and elected on that pledge, to support the corn laws without mitigation. Fifty votes from the protectionist side, and fifty added to the side of free traders, would not, in another session, give a numerical majority, but would indicate such certainty of the triumph of free trade principles, as would induce the majority to yield before it became a minority. How was that change to be effected, and when? A leaf must be taken from the enemy's book. The battle, as Sir Robert Peel had said when the Tories recovered from the panic into which they were thrown by the Reform Bill—'the battle must be fought in the registration courts,' and the League directed its energies in that course, confident that, if it were not possible to obtain repeal under a Peel parliament, the triumph would come at the next general election, come when that might."

CHAPTER LIX.

Mr. Goulburn's Financial Statement in 1844—Great Debate on the Sugar Duties—Defeat and Re-instatement of the Ministers—Mr. Disraeli's Attack on Sir R. Peel—Schism in the Tory Party—Temporary Revival of Prosperity—Rick-burning and "Richmondism"—The Landowners' "Anti-League League"—Speech of Mr. Bright at Covent Garden Theatre—Parliamentary Session, 1845—The Second Great Free Trade Budget—Increased Estrangement between Sir Robert Peel and the Ultra-Conservatives—Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens' Description of the League—Mr. Miles's Motion—Debate on Mr. Villiers' Motion, 1845—Significant Speech of Sir J. Graham—The Potato Disease—Crisis in the Cabinet—Lord J. Russell's Letter to the Electors of the City of London—Resignation of Sir Robert Peel—Lord J. Russell's Failure to form a Government—Recall of Sir R. Peel—Immense Subscriptions to the League Fund—Re-assembling of Parliament—The Queen's Speech—Excitement in the House of Lords—Debate on the Address in the Commons—Sir R. Peel's Statement of his Commercial Policy—Great Debate on the Corn-Law Importation Bill—Final Triumph of Free Trade—Lord Stanley's Prediction of the Downfall of the Peel Administration—Farewell Speech of Sir R. Peel—Dissolution of the League—Conclusion of the Struggle.

MR. GOULBURN'S financial statement was made on the 8th of May, 1844. It comprised some small reductions of taxation, and the foretaste of an important modification of the sugar duties. As a money account it was encouraging, and showed some progress in diminishing the disastrous effects of Whig finance. The past financial year had witnessed a gross surplus of revenue over expenditure of more than £4,000,000; or, after paying the deficiency of the previous year, £2,400,000; and after making other deductions there was, for the first time for many years, an available surplus, amounting to £1,400,000. The anticipated good effects of relieving industry from burdensome taxes had been more than realised. The estimate of the revenue had actually been exceeded by £2,700,000. The Budget, therefore, fully justified the policy of 1842; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer ventured only on a small and timid extension of the principles then laid down, with the reduction

or abolition of duty on flint glass, currants, wool, and some other minor matters. The abolition of the wool duty provoked new hostility to the impolitic duty on cotton. The concession to free trade principles was small; but the movement was kept up, and there was at least no sign of reaction.

Although announced with the Budget, the proposed change in the sugar duties formed a separate and more momentous question. At that time, strictly foreign sugar was virtually prohibited by the excessive differential duties—British plantation sugar paying a duty of 25s. 3d. per cwt. foreign, of 66s. 2d. When the Whig Administration had proposed

on foreign sugar, *the growth of slave countries*; but henceforth it was proposed that the duty on foreign sugar, the produce of free labour, should pay only 10s. more than colonial. Thus was the first great blow struck at the protective sugar duties, and that West Indian party which had so long prevailed in Parliament over the interests of the people. But the battle had yet to be fought.

The West India interest in the city held great meetings, and instructed their parliamentary representatives for the coming contest. The free traders argued that the Government proposition was simply that the West India proprietors should receive 10s. per cwt.



LORD GEORGE BENTINCK.

to diminish this enormous difference, the Tories had pleaded the injustice to the West India landlords of taking away their slaves, and then exposing them to competition with countries still possessing slave labour. The question had thus become one of party. The Whigs were pledged to consult the interests of the British consumer; the Tories to protect the West Indies; and beating the Whigs on this very point, the Tories had turned them out of office. The British consumer had, however, happily some voice in the elections, and the problem was now to conciliate him without a glaring breach of consistency. Accordingly, the tax on our colonial sugar was to be left untouched, as was the tax

more for the sugar they sent here than the growers in any other part of the world could get. This was equivalent to a tax of £2,000,000 upon the people of England, because the West India landlords were alleged to be in distress, and could not cultivate their estates. It was, indeed, the old question of protection for the landed interest on the ground of peculiar burdens. The white population of the West Indies amounted only to about a tenth of the whole; and it was admitted that the free coloured people, forming the bulk of the community, had no interest in the proposed monopoly. Moreover, it had been shown by repeated experiment that these differential duties always defeated their own objects. The

slave-grown sugar was simply exported first to the free country, and then to England—the English people paying in the enhanced cost of the article all the cost of this circuitous mode of supply.

The opposition, however, was powerful. When Mr. Goulburn brought forward his resolution by which sugar certified to be the growth of China, Manilla, Java, or other countries where no slave labour was employed, should be admitted at a duty of 34s., the colonial duty being 24s., the danger of the position of the Ministers was soon perceived. Lord John Russell proposed an amendment in favour of admitting *all* foreign sugars at 34s., a proposal which, though calculated to maintain the price of sugar at a higher point than the Government proposition, was less distasteful to the free traders, as abolishing the differential principle. This amendment was rejected by a majority of only 69.

On the 14th of June the Government bill came on for a third reading, and the contest then began in earnest.

Mr. Miles, the representative of the West India party, moved an amendment proposing a reduction of the duty on colonial sugar to 20s., instead of 24s., and the raising of the duties on foreign to 30s. and 34s. The free trade party were not entrapped by this offer of a reduction of 4s. on colonial sugar. They saw that Mr. Miles's amendment would only establish a differential duty of 14s. instead of 10s., the difference going to the West India planters. They now, moreover, at least hoped more from Sir Robert Peel than from any minister likely to succeed him. Mr. Cobden and the League party therefore supported the Government; but so powerful was the combination against them, that the division, which took place on the 14th of June, left the Ministers in a minority of 20.

The events which followed form part of the general history of that time. The Government well knew that they were more popular in the country than their opponents. In the few days that succeeded, during which men were doubtful whether they would resign, the Minister had had time to feel the power of that popularity, and the value of the support of the free trade party. To satisfy the selfish expectations of the more bigoted of his own supporters must have seemed to him more and more hopeless. To break with them, and to look elsewhere for the support which their vindictiveness would inevitably render necessary—to become less a leader of a class, and more a statesman seeking the true foundations of power in a steady regard to the welfare of the great bulk of the community—were ideas naturally present to the Minister's mind.

When he met Parliament again to announce the determination of the Government to ask the House to reconsider its decision, his tone was observed to be more bitter than before. His allusions to the defections of his own followers were significant; but they plainly indicated that his course was taken. "We cannot conceal from ourselves," he said, "that in respect to some of the measures we have proposed, and which have been supported, they have not met with that cordial assent and agreement from those for whose character and opinions

we entertain the highest and sincerest respect. But I am bound to say, speaking here of them with perfect respect, that we cannot invite their co-operation and support upon the present occasion by holding out expectations that we shall take a middle or other course with regard to those measures which we believe to be best for the interests of the country, and consistent with justice." This modest but firm defiance of the ultra-protectionist party was not lost upon the free traders in the House; neither were the Minister's further remarks—"We have thought it desirable to relax the system of protection, and admit into competition with articles of the domestic produce of this country articles from foreign lands. We have attempted to counsel the enforcement of principles which we believe to be founded in truth, and with every regard for existing institutions, and with every precaution to prevent embarrassment and undue alarm."

The League party forgave an occasional allusion to the necessity for maintaining and protecting the great existing interests of the country, for the sake of the conclusion in which Sir R. Peel said, "We think the course we took the right one; that a gradual, safe, and circumspect relaxation of the sugar duties, which would have prevented undue competition in the domestic produce of this country, was best. We cannot profess any repentance. We cannot declare our conversion to a different principle. We are prepared to abide by the engagements we have made and the principles we profess; and *the same course of gradual improvement is the course we must continue to pursue.*" The question was now recognised to be one between the Minister and the extreme protection party. Nor were the latter long in finding a spokesman who aspired to be the leader of that secession which the far-seeing perceived to be inevitable.

It was on this occasion that Mr. Disraeli, rising from the benches filled with the ordinary supporters of the Government, delivered one of those bitter and sarcastic diatribes which thenceforward proved so effective in arousing the revengeful feelings of those of the party who believed their interests to have been betrayed in deference to the League. "I remember," he said, "in 1841 the right hon. baronet used these words: he said, 'I have never joined in the anti-slavery cry, and now I will not join in the cry of cheap sugar.' Two years have elapsed, and the right hon. gentleman *has* joined in the anti-slavery cry, and *has* adopted the cry of cheap sugar. But," he continued, appealing to the rebellious supporters of the Government, whom the Minister had just defied, "it seems that the right hon. baronet's horror of slavery extends to every place except the benches behind him. There the gang is still assembled, and there the thong of the whip still resounds. The right hon. gentleman," he added, "came into power upon the strength of our votes, but he would rely for the permanence of his ministry upon his political opponents. He may be right—he may even be to a certain degree successful in pursuing the line of conduct which he has adopted, menacing his friends, and cringing to his opponents; but I, for one, am disposed to look upon it as a success neither

tending to the honour of the House nor to his own credit. I therefore must be excused if I declare my determination to give my vote upon this occasion as I did in the former instance; and as I do not follow the example of the hon. and gallant member near me (Sir H. Douglas), it will not subject me to the imputation of having voted on the former occasion without thought or purpose." The appeal of the Ministers, however, was, fortunately for the free trade movement, for a time successful. The Government were reinstated by a vote of 255 to 233, in a House in which both parties had evidently done their utmost.

The party which, under the guidance of Mr. Disraeli, Lord Stanley, and Lord George Bentinck, were destined to present so formidable an opposition to the Minister's policy, and to render his labours in the interests of the people so full of pain and anxiety, as yet only marked its existence by murmurs along the Conservative benches. As usual, the somewhat revived prosperity of the country was the chief pretext for resisting change. People with this view did not see the danger of opposing reforms, until a sudden storm compelled the Legislature to face them with mischievous haste. It had again and again been shown that the evils of the old system of restrictions lay chiefly in the fact, that they led to violent fluctuations in the circumstances of the people. Nothing, therefore, could be more certain than that, even had the prosperity been tenfold greater, one of those alternations of depression which brought so much misery to the people would not be long in making its appearance. The monopolist party, however, seldom looked beyond the day or the hour. There had been rick-burning in the country, and an agricultural labourer, named Joseph Lankester, had declared that his object in committing this crime was to raise the price of wheat, and so bring about those high wages which the political farmers and landlords were always saying came from good prices in the corn market. The Protectionist lords declared, nevertheless, that the Anti-Corn-Law League, with their mischievous agitation, their models of the big and little loaf, their lectures and meetings, their music and banners, their poisonous tracts and pamphlets, were at the bottom of these disturbances; while the League rejoined by declaring that Joseph Lankester's views were only "Richmondism put in practice;" that the destruction of bonded wheat, when the duties became more than it was worth, was but another phase of "Lankesterism;" and that, indeed, the whole theory of the Corn Law, the object of which was to render corn dear by artificial means, was closely akin to the ignorant notions of the deluded rick-burners. In the towns, however, political agitation was comparatively silent. To some agriculturists it appeared a fair compromise to maintain the protective laws in consideration of their being content to put up with the low prices of the day. Any way, the dreaded League seemed to them to be checked.

The landowners had established an Anti-League League, for counteracting the Manchester men with their own weapons—an association which the satirists

of the day represented by a slightly modified picture from the fable of the frog and the bull. To those, however, who read only the tracts of the Anti-League League, it doubtless appeared that the torrent was to some degree arrested. It began to be asserted that the League was extinct, that the country was sick of its incessant agitation, and that Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright were about to "back out." These, however, were not the views of the League men. Like the mariner, who has work appropriate for foul weather as well as for fine, and all equally conducive to his ultimate object of taking his vessel into port, the Manchester men, and their friends and supporters throughout England, worked harder than ever. The lists of voters, the freehold land scheme, and the gathering in of that £100,000 fund which was now fast approaching completion, furnished them abundant employment for their hands, and it was carried on with a success which gave sure promise of the final undermining of the stronghold of the enemy.

"My hope," said the greatest orator of the movement at one of the League meetings at this period, "is brighter than ever; my faith is undimmed by the smallest shadow of a doubt. There is everything throughout the whole country which betokens the speedy and final triumph of this question. And why should it not triumph? We seek only that which the good and the just in all ages have sought; we are seeking for freedom and justice. This is a struggle which has been going on upon the earth for thousands of years. Our forefathers have carried it on, and they have gone to their rest; we are working out the same object in our day and generation. Many of us will live to see the accomplishment of this great work, and those who come after us will have something else to do. And I trust that in all this labour we shall leave them an example of steady determination and unflinching perseverance on behalf of that which we believe to be right and just. In a great struggle, in the long run, the just always wins. He must have read very little of history who does not know that liberty is triumphing. There is more freedom and justice in the world now by far than there ever was at any former period. There are more men having a love of what is just and right; the oppressor is cowed and abashed; he does not come amongst us with force and violence, but he works insidiously and treacherously; he wraps his chain in chaplets of flowers, and thus he tyrannises over his countrymen. Yes, freedom is Heaven's first gift to man. But bear in mind that, precious and excellent as this liberty is, there are certain conditions upon which alone it can be obtained and secured. You must rely upon yourselves for it. Liberty is too precious and sacred a thing ever to be entrusted to the keeping of another man. Be the guardians of your own rights and liberties. If you are not, you will have no protectors, but spoilers of all that you possess. You can only hold it on the condition of perpetual vigilance. You must look at it as though it were a matter of business; you must consider this question of defending your rights as a concern no less important than that of providing for your family. What is it but this, if we come to look narrowly into it? This freedom for which you struggle

is the freedom to live; it is the right to "eat your bread by the sweat of your brow." It is the freedom which was given to you even in the primeval curse; and shall man make that curse more bitter to his fellow-man? No; instead of despairing, I have more confidence and faith than ever. I believe that those old delusions and superstitions which, like verminous and polluted rags, have disfigured the fair form of this country's greatness, are now fast dropping away. I think I behold the dawn of a brighter day; all around are the elements of a mighty movement. We stand as on the very threshold of a new career; and may we not say this League—this great and growing confederacy of those who love justice and hate oppression—has scattered, broadcast throughout the land, seed from which shall spring forth, ere long, an abundant, a glorious harvest of true greatness for our country, and of permanent happiness for mankind?" *

The Parliamentary session for 1845 was opened by the Queen in person, on the 4th of February. At a meeting a few days earlier, Mr. Cobden had warned his hearers that no change in the corn laws could be expected from Sir R. Peel, so long as the Ministry could avail themselves of the old excuse, the revived prosperity of manufactures and commerce. "Ours," he had said, "is a very simple proposition. We say to the right honourable baronet, Abolish the monopolies which go to enrich that majority which placed you in power and keeps you there. We know he will not attempt it; but we are quite certain he will make great professions of being a free trader, notwithstanding." The following vague passage in the Queen's speech—"The prospect of continued peace, and the general state of domestic prosperity and tranquillity, afford a favourable opportunity for the consideration of the important matters to which I have directed your attention; and I commit them to your deliberation, with the earnest prayer that you may be enabled, under the superintending care and protection of Divine Providence, to strengthen the feelings of mutual confidence and good-will between different classes of my subjects, and to improve the condition of my people"—appeared only too clearly to confirm this view; but the sequel showed that the free traders had scarcely done justice to the intentions of the Minister. The debate on the address produced a remarkable declaration from Lord John Russell of his conviction "that protection is not the support but the bane of agriculture."

The budget was brought forward on the 13th of February. It proposed to continue the income tax, which experience had shown to afford a means of supplying the place of taxes repealed, until such time as the revenue should recover itself. The Minister then unfolded his scheme, which formed no unworthy complement to his great budget of 1842. It proposed a reduction in the sugar duties, which could not be calculated at less than £1,300,000, and was expected to reduce the price to the consumer by about 1½d. a pound. The Minister then proceeded to refer to a list of articles, 430 in number, which yielded but trifling amounts of revenue, and many

of which were raw materials used in the various manufactures of the country, including silk, hemp, flax, and yarn or thread (except worsted yarn), all woods used in cabinet-making, animal and vegetable oils, iron and zinc in the first stages, ores and minerals (except copper ore, to which the last act was still to apply), dye stuffs of all kinds, and all drugs, with very few exceptions; on the whole of these articles he proposed to repeal the duties altogether, not even leaving a nominal rate for registration, but retaining the power of examination. The timber duties generally he proposed to remain as they were, with the one exception of staves, which, as the raw material of the extensive manufacture of casks, he proposed to include with the 430 articles, and to take off the duty altogether. On these articles the loss amounted to £320,000.

The next and most important relief in the whole proposition was the article of cotton wool, on which the Minister proposed also to reduce the duty altogether, and on which he estimated the loss at £680,000; and these constituted the whole of the proposed reductions of the import duties—that is, sugar, cotton wool, and the numerous small articles in the tariff. The next items of reduction proposed were the few remaining duties on our exports, such as china-stone, and other trifling things, but including the most important article of coals, on which the duty had been placed by the Government, and of the result of which Sir Robert Peel candidly avowed his disappointment. The duties he estimated at £118,000.

He then passed on to the excise duties, among which he had selected two items of great importance for entire repeal—the auction duty and the glass duties. By a repeal of the auction duty he estimated a loss of £300,000; but as he proposed, at the same time, to increase the auctioneer's licence uniformly from £5 to £15 (making one licence answer for all purposes, whereas, at that time, several licences were often necessary to the same party), he expected from 4,000 auctioneers an increased income, so as to reduce this loss to £250,000. On the important article of glass, he gave up £642,000.

These constituted the whole of his proposals; and the surplus of £2,409,000 was thus proposed to be disposed of:—Estimated loss on sugar, £1,300,000; duty on cotton repealed, £680,000; ditto on 430 articles in tariff, £320,000; export duty on coal, £118,000; auction duty, £250,000; glass, £642,000. Total, £3,310,000.

The budget excited extraordinary interest throughout the country; but the proposed sugar duties were, in the eyes of the free traders, objectionable, as maintaining the differential rates in favour of the West Indian landlords. Though well received on the whole, it was impossible not to see in the budget traces of the anomalous position of the Minister. One newspaper described his measures as combining the most glaring inconsistencies that ever disfigured the policy of any Minister, and arranged in parallel columns illustrations of its assertion. Sir Robert Peel was charged with proposing at the same time a tariff whose express object

* Speech of Mr. Bright at the League Meeting held at Covent Garden Theatre, Dec. 12, 1844.

was declared to be to cheapen the necessities of life and corn, and provision laws whose sole object was to make the chief necessities of life dear; with professing great concern to relieve trade and commerce, for the sake of which a property tax was proposed, combined with a still greater concern to uphold the rent of land, for the sake of which trade and commerce were loaded with a bread tax; with devising taxes for the mere purposes of revenue; with taxes for the mere purpose of protection; with repealing the duty on slave-grown cotton, while imposing prohibitory duties on slave-grown sugar; with encouraging Brazilian coffee and cotton, while refusing Brazilian sugar; and with admitting cheap slave-grown sugar to be refined in England, and sold to Continental nations, while forbidding the selfsame cheap sugar to our own working people. Still, there was progress. The Corn Law was untouched, but statesmen of all parties had spoken despairingly of its continuance.

The gulf between the Minister and the landowners was widening. The debates on the budget, and on Mr. Cobden's motion for inquiry into the alleged agricultural distress, had drawn out more bitter speeches from Mr. Disraeli, and served still further to mark the distinction between the Minister and a large section of his old followers. But one of the most significant signs of the time was the increasing tendency to recognise the talents and singleness of purpose of the Anti-Corn-Law Leaguers. It became almost fashionable to compliment "the ability of Mr. Cobden." It was almost forgotten that the Minister had once carried with him the whole House in making an excited charge against that gentleman of marking him out for assassination. The bitterness of the ultra Protectionists was certainly unabated; but neither the *Quarterly* nor any other review now classed the Manchester men with rick-burners and assassins, or called upon the Government to indict them for sedition.

An able writer has given a spirited sketch of the growth of the League in the estimation of the public. "Month after month, and day after day," says Mr. McCullagh Torrens, "that great combination of commercial wealth, energy, and intellect extended its influence. It had outgrown the silly septicism of West-end Liberalism, and the idle interdict of Tory wrath. It had struck root palpably in the electoral soil of the country; and though the time had not come for bearing fruit, it was manifestly approaching. The Parliament was four years old—a consideration which, in times of change, outweighs most others in the minds of constitutional Ministers. It had been confidently prophesied by all, who read events in the shadows they cast behind them, when Sir R. Peel had been borne into office by a majority of ninety, that the League would die out. It was formed of vulgar stuff, of common clay, that had not the ring of gentility in it; and that must soon go to the bottom from sheer want of floating power. The idea of a mere middle-class movement succeeding, without the leadership or even the patronage of either set of hereditary legislators, was simply absurd—so absurd, indeed, that no thorough-bred politician believed in its possibility until after it had happened. Manchester might talk of raising £50,000,

and might possibly do it; for was not the effort to obtain free trade a good investment, after all, for rich manufacturers, who must find new markets to employ their accumulative capital? But the clubs, and the press, and the constituencies of the kingdom, were too long accustomed to fetch and carry at the bidding of the old, recognised party leaders, to be won over or bullied by a knot of nobodies, however pertinacious or persevering. When the £50,000 had been raised and spent in holding scores of meetings, and getting up hundreds of petitions, and circulating many thousands of statistical pamphlets, Whiggery and Toryism nodded to one another across the street, and laughed each in its sleeve as it wondered 'what these people would do now.' These people said they would raise £100,000; and what was worse, they began to do it. Regardless of Lord Melbourne's saucy veto, and his having said 'that they would take the crown off Her Majesty's head,' several excitable persons, who ought to have known better, joined the League. Lord Fitzwilliam asked Mr. Cobden to Wentworth, and drove him over to Doncaster next day, to attend a great gathering there; but then the earl was so odd that sensible men would not mind him. It was certainly more provoking when Mr. Jones Loyd gave in his adhesion; but still he was only a banker; and as for the City election, in which Mr. Pattison had beaten Mr. Thomas Baring, that was one of those caprices of large constituencies, like Mr. Hume's return for Middlesex in 1831, which could not be accounted for. But when it was ascertained for a fact that the Marquis of Westminster had subscribed £500 to the League Fund, a certain sense of misgiving began to creep over the minds of the best-bred unbelievers, and fear fell upon all who had paid dear for their seats in Parliament, and who, if they were to hold them, knew that they must pay dear for them again. The shadow of events began to be cast the other way; and every time-serving trimmer and fribble set about learning to read what was indicated thereby. Two hateful facts grew day by day more clear, alike to Whig and Tory minds—that the League would not die, and that the Parliament speedily would. Symptoms of a gradual giving way became discernible in what had undoubtedly been the prevalent faith in protection; and thousands who, above all things, dreaded commotion, and who still tried to persuade one another that they despised the League, half inarticulately began to mutter a wish that the troublesome question were settled." *

The debate on Mr. Villiers' annual motion, on the 10th of June, produced still further evidences of the decline of Protectionist principles. At that meeting Sir James Graham, who was currently believed to be better acquainted with the feelings of the Premier than any other of the Ministers, said, "He would not deny that it was his opinion, that by a gradual and cautious policy it was expedient to bring our system of corn laws into a nearer approximation to those wholesome principles which governed legislation with respect to other indus-

* "Life of Sir James Graham, by T. McCullagh Torrens," 1862.

trial departments. But it was his conviction that suddenly and at once to throw open the trade in corn, would be inconsistent with the well-being of the community, and would give such a shock to the agricultural interest, as would throw many other interests into a state of convulsion. The object of every Government, without distinction of party, for the last twenty years, had been to substitute protecting duties for prohibitory duties, and to reduce gradually protecting duties, where it had them to deal with. He approved of this as a safe principle, and showed that it was the key-stone of the policy of Sir Robert Peel. . . . If they could show him that free trade with open ports would produce a more abundant supply to the labourer, they would make him (Sir James) a convert to the doctrine of free trade in corn. He confessed that he placed no value on the fixed duty of four shillings lately proposed; it would be of no avail as a protection, whilst it would be liable to all the obloquy of a protecting duty; and he therefore thought that *if they got rid of the present corn law, they had better assent to a total repeal.*"

Sir Robert Peel spoke more cautiously; but he began by striking away a favourite maxim of his party, in observing that experience proved that the high price of corn was not accompanied by a high rate of wages, and that wages did not vary with the price of corn. He said that he "must proceed, in pursuance of his own policy, to reconcile the gradual approach of our legislation to sound principle on this subject, with the interests which had grown up under a different state of things;" but he admitted that it would be "impossible to maintain any law on the ground that it was intended to keep up rents."

Lord Howick pointed out that not one word had been said during the evening by the Government in contradiction to the resolutions of Mr. Villiers, condemnatory of the Corn Law. In fact, the Anti-Corn-Law struggle had come to this, that a Tory Ministry had made a full concession of free trade principles, and had no ground of demur to Mr. Villiers' motion, but that it was too precipitate.

Such was the position of affairs when Parliament was prorogued on the 9th of August. The Peel Ministry appeared to be as firmly seated as any combination then possible was likely to be, and the agriculturists' monopoly seemed safe at least for another year; but the Government had already received warnings of a coming storm. The weather had been for some time wet and cold, but as yet a general failure of the wheat crop was not anticipated. The trouble approached from a quarter in which no one had looked for it. Early in the month of August, Sir Robert Peel had received an account of an extraordinary appearance in the potato crop in the Isle of Wight. On the 11th of August, Sir James Graham received a letter from a great potato salesman, indicating that the same mysterious signs were observable throughout the south-eastern counties, and he hastened to communicate the facts to his colleague. These isolated observations soon became confirmed from numerous quarters, and the account was everywhere the

same. First a brown spot was observable on the skin of the potato; then the spot became black, the leaves and flowers of whole fields grew shrivelled, black, and putrid; and the crops, wherever the plague appeared, were almost entirely destroyed. From Ireland the most alarming accounts were received, and the newspapers were quickly filled with details of the progress of the "potato disease." It began to be asked what would be done with the unemployed multitudes in that country, whose stock of provisions for the next ten months was gone?

The Government at once sent Dr. Lindley and Dr. Playfair, two men of science, to Ireland, in the hope that they might be able to suggest remedies for staying the progress of the disease, or preserve that portion of the crop which was still untainted; and the consular agents in different parts of Europe and of America were directed to make inquiries and endeavour to obtain a supply of sound potatoes for seed; indeed, the seed question was even more important than that more immediately pressing one, of how the people were to be fed. In addition to this, early in October, they secretly gave orders for the purchase abroad of £100,000 worth of Indian corn, to be conveyed to Irish ports for distribution among the people. These measures, however, proved of little avail, and meanwhile it became evident that in a great portion of the United Kingdom a famine was inevitable, which could not fail to influence the price of provisions of all kinds elsewhere. During this time it became known that the harvest, about which opinions had fluctuated so much, would be everywhere deficient. The friends of Sir Robert Peel in the Cabinet who shared his free trade tendencies knew then how impossible it was that the already tottering system of the corn laws could be any longer maintained. The Ministers had scarcely reached the country seats in which they looked for repose, after the labours of the session, ere the cry of "Open the ports" was raised throughout the kingdom; but except three, none of them took the Minister's view of the gravity of the crisis. All knew that the ports once open, public opinion would probably for ever prevent the re-introduction of the duties, and the majority of the Cabinet for a time still adhered to their Protectionist principles.

The magnitude of the interests at stake, the difficulty of estimating the real character and extent of the threatened evil, and the alarming consequences which must ensue, if the worst fears should be realised, rendered immediate action necessary. A Cabinet Council was held on the 31st of October. From what passed on that occasion, says Sir Robert Peel, in the account which he has left of these events, "it was easy to foresee that there was little prospect of a common accord as to the measures to be adopted." On the 5th of November he apprised Her Majesty of the probability of serious differences of opinion. At the adjourned meeting of the Cabinet, on the 6th of November, he submitted certain proposals for the consideration of his colleagues, which he has recorded in the following outline of these events:—

CABINET MEMORANDUM, NOVEMBER 6.

"To issue forthwith an order in council remitting the duty on grain in bond to one shilling, and opening the ports for the admission of all species of grain at a smaller rate of duty until a day named in the order.

"To call Parliament together on the 27th instant, to ask for indemnity and a sanction of the order by law.

"To propose to Parliament no other measure than that during the sitting before Christmas. To declare an intention of submitting to Parliament immediately after the recess a modification of the existing law, but to decline entering into any details in Parliament with regard to such modification.

"Such modification to include the admission, at a

once relinquishing office; but, after mature reflection, considering that the rejection of my proposals was not a peremptory one by all of those who for the present declined to adopt them, that additional information might materially abate the objections of many, and that the dissolution of a Government on account of differences on such a matter as that under consideration must cause great excitement in the public mind, I determined to retain office until there should be the opportunity of re-consideration of the whole subject. That opportunity would necessarily recur at the latter end of this current month (November), when it was agreed that the Cabinet should again assemble. In determining to retain office for the present, I determined also not to recede from the



SIR JAMES GRAHAM.

nominal duty, of Indian corn and of British colonial corn."

The Cabinet, by a very considerable majority, declined giving its assent to the proposals which the Minister thus made to them. They were supported by only three members of the Cabinet—the Earl of Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. The other members of the Cabinet, some on the ground of objection to the principle of the measures recommended, others upon the ground that there was not yet sufficient evidence of the necessity for them, withheld their sanction.

"On account of the gravity of the question (says Sir R. Peel), and the smallness of the minority assenting to my views, I might, perhaps have been justified in at

position which I had taken, and ultimately to resign office if I should find on the re-assembling of the Cabinet that the opinions I had expressed did not meet with general concurrence. I determined also, in order to guard against the mischievous consequences of failure in such an undertaking, not to attempt the adjustment of the question at issue, unless there should be a moral assurance of ultimate success. It was most painful to me to differ from colleagues with whom I had hitherto acted in uninterrupted harmony, for whom I had sincere personal regard, and cordial esteem and respect founded on an intimate knowledge of their motives and conduct in the discharge of their respective duties."

On the 2nd of November the following letter was

addressed to the Minister by Lord Stanley, containing an exposition of the grounds on which he dissented from the proposals submitted to the Cabinet:—

[*Secret.*] “Colonial Office, November 2, 1845.

“MY DEAR PEEL,—I find it difficult to express to you the regret with which I see how widely I differ in opinion with Graham and yourself as to the necessity for proposing to Parliament a repeal of the corn laws. Since the Cabinet on Saturday, I have reflected much and anxiously upon it; but I cannot bring my mind to any other conclusion than that at which I had then arrived. I have thought it best to put down in writing the view of the case which presents itself to me; and when you have read it, I will thank you to send it on to Graham, with whom I have had no conversation upon it. I foresee that this question, if you persevere in your present opinion, must break up the Government one way or the other; but I shall greatly regret indeed if it should be broken up, not in consequence of our feeling that we had proposed measures which it properly belonged to others to carry, but in consequence of differences of opinion among ourselves.”

The purport of these Cabinet Councils was generally understood by the country; but as yet only the most sanguine anticipated the proposal of Sir Robert Peel, when the *Times* newspaper on the 4th of December announced, apparently from secret information, that it was the intention of the Government to repeal the corn laws, and to call Parliament together in January for that purpose. The assertion was received with incredulity, not only by the Opposition, but by the Ministerial journals. One organ of the Tory party placarded its office with a bill, headed “Atrocious fabrication of the *Times*!” But the latter journal, on the following day, declared that it “adhered to its original announcement.” Day by day the controversy raged in the newspapers; but the news was too probable not to gain credence. The result was a conviction throughout the country that the *Times* had really obtained information of the Government’s intentions. Meanwhile Lord Ashley, a staunch upholder of the corn laws, in a letter to his constituents of Dorsetshire, declared his opinion “that the destiny of the corn laws was fixed,” and that it would be wise to consider “how best to break the force of an inevitable blow.” Mr. Bickham and Captain Estcott, also strong defenders of the landlord’s monopoly, published their conviction that the corn laws were no longer tenable; and on the 22nd of November Lord J. Russell, who was at Edinburgh, addressed a letter to the electors of the city, which was duly circulated throughout the kingdom, and which contained the following remarkable passages:—

“I confess that, on the general subject, my views have, in the course of twenty years, undergone a great alteration. I used to be of opinion that corn was an exception to the general rules of political economy; but observation and experience have convinced me that we ought to abstain from all interference with the supply of food. Neither a government nor a legislature can ever regulate the corn markets with the beneficial effects

which the entire freedom of sale and purchase are sure of themselves to produce.

“I have for several years endeavoured to obtain a compromise on this subject. The result of resistance to qualified concession must be the same in the present instance as in those I have mentioned. *It is no longer worth while to contend for a fixed duty.* In 1841 the free-trade party would have agreed to a duty of 8s. a quarter on wheat, and after a lapse of years this duty might have been further reduced, and ultimately abolished. But the imposition of any duty, at present, without a provision for its extension within a short period, would but prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent. The struggle to make bread scarce and dear, when it is clear that part, at least, of the additional price goes to increase rent, is a struggle deeply injurious to an aristocracy which (this quarrel once removed) is strong in property, strong in the construction of our legislature, strong in opinion, strong in ancient associations, and the memory of immortal services.

“Let us, then, unite to put an end to a system which has been proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter divisions among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people.”

The Cabinet met again on the 25th, when Sir Robert Peel informed his colleagues that, in the position of affairs, he could not abstain from advising the immediate suspension, by order in council, of the restrictive law of importation, or the early assembling of Parliament for the purpose of proposing a permanent change. Lord Aberdeen, Mr. Sidney Herbert, and Sir James Graham supported him. The Duke of Wellington gave a reluctant adhesion. It then became known that Lord Stanley had withdrawn from the Ministry, and it was believed that the Duke of Buccleuch intended to follow his example. The majority of the Cabinet had, after many deliberations, decided in favour of a permanent reduction in the sliding scale; but the position of the Minister was now too uncertain for him to attempt to carry through his measures. A resignation was the only step which could show the true strength of parties, and determine who would and who would not follow the Minister in that course which, if he was to return to power, he had now finally resolved to take. On the 6th of December he announced his determination to Her Majesty, and the public were excited with the news that the Peel Administration was at an end.

Lord John Russell was immediately summoned from Scotland, and on the 11th arrived at Osborne, where he received Her Majesty’s commands to form a Government. On the ground that his party were in a minority in the House of Commons, Lord John Russell at first declined the honour presented to him; but on a paper being placed in his hands by the Queen, in which Sir R. Peel promised, in his private capacity, to aid and give every support to the new Ministry in settling the question of the corn laws, he undertook the task. There was no amicable feeling between the new and the retiring Minister. Lord John Russell’s letter, published

a few days before, had excited as much attention for its bitter sarcasm against Sir R. Peel as for the important change in the Whig policy which it announced.

Lord John Russell held communication with the late Government, but through Sir J. Graham. It was of importance to him to know more clearly the nature of that support which Sir R. Peel's memorandum seemed to promise; and he was, therefore, anxious to know what the latter would consider a satisfactory settlement. This proposal, however, to the late Minister to become responsible for the measures of his successors was declined. Sir J. Graham communicated to Lord John Russell the information as to the state of the country on which they acted; but Sir R. Peel, through his colleague, declined to state the details of the measures which had lately been contemplated. Lord John Russell then gave, in writing, an outline of the measures which the new Cabinet would propose, and invited the opinion of the late Minister. Sir R. Peel, however, still declined to take part in the plans of his opponents; and in a letter to the Queen, on the 17th of December, he stated the constitutional grounds on which he considered it improper that any one, not an adviser of the Crown, should take a part in the preparation of Ministerial measures. Lord John Russell thereupon immediately proceeded with his negotiations with his own party. It soon, however, appeared that the task he had proposed to himself was beyond his power.

Earl Grey, who had agreed to take the Secretaryship of the Colonies in the new Ministry, suddenly declared that he would not join any administration in which Lord Palmerston should hold the office of Secretary for Foreign Affairs. This unexpected accident was regarded by Lord John Russell as decisive. On the 20th of December he communicated the facts to the Queen, and begged to be relieved from the task he had undertaken.

On the day before Her Majesty had desired to see Sir Robert Peel, to bid him farewell; but before he had set out for Windsor he had learnt the circumstances of the failure of the Whig leader to form a cabinet; and as the result of his interview with the Queen, he returned to London to resume the reins of government. His position was greatly strengthened. Of his late cabinet, Lord Stanley alone insisted on retiring. The baffled Whigs and the discontented monopolist party threatened a formidable combination; but, as regarded the Ministry itself, the change of policy was effected with far less sacrifice than might have been expected. The change, however, in the Minister's position was enormous.

"When the right honourable baronet resigned," said Mr. Bright, addressing the Protectionist party some weeks later, "he was no longer your Minister. He came back to office as the Minister of the Sovereign, as the Minister of the people, and not again as the Minister of a class who made him such for their own selfish objects." The free-traders, however, relaxed no jot of their efforts: they even prepared them-

selves for a still more energetic movement than they had yet contemplated. A long course of Parliamentary battles was still before them; and they had too often seen success apparently at hand to be lulled into a false security.

A great free trade meeting was held in the Manchester Town Hall on the 23rd of December, and was attended by almost every important manufacturer and merchant in the town and neighbourhood, at the close of which the chairman announced that a sum of £59,165 had been subscribed in furtherance of the objects of the Anti-Corn-Law League, during the hour and a half the doors of the hall had been opened. In one month from the reinstatement of Sir Robert Peel, £150,000 had flowed into the League fund.

Parliament reassembled, according to the Minister's plan, at the unusually early date of the 22nd of January. The Queen's speech, read by Her Majesty in person, thus alluded to the topic most prominent in the public mind:—

"I have to lament that, in consequence of the failure of the potato crop in several parts of the United Kingdom, there will be a deficient supply of an article of food which forms the chief subsistence of great numbers of my people.

"The disease by which the plant has been affected has prevailed to the greatest extent in Ireland.

"I have adopted all such precautions as it was in my power to adopt for the purpose of alleviating the sufferings which may be caused by this calamity; and I shall confidently rely on your co-operation in devising such other means for effecting the same benevolent purpose as may require the sanction of the Legislature."

On the subject of the free trade measures generally, the speech continued:—

"I have had great satisfaction in giving my assent to the measures which you have presented to me from time to time, calculated to extend commerce, and to stimulate domestic skill and industry, by the repeal of prohibitory and the relaxation of protective duties.

"The prosperous state of the revenue, the increased demand for labour, and the general improvement which has taken place in the internal condition of the country, are strong testimonies in favour of the course you have pursued.

"I recommend you to take into your early consideration whether the principles on which you have acted may not with advantage be yet more extensively applied; and whether it may not be in your power, after a careful review of the existing duties upon many articles, the produce or manufacture of other countries, to make such further reductions and remissions as may tend to ensure the continuance of the great benefits to which I have adverted, and, by enlarging our commercial intercourse, to strengthen the bonds of amity with foreign powers."

In the House of Lords, the comments on the Ministerial measures were characterised by much bitterness, both against the Government and the League; and the Duke of Richmond asked why Mr. Cobden was not

created a peer, and placed on the Treasury Bench in the House of Lords? In the Commons the excitement among the Protectionist party was no less manifest; but the crowded House waited impatiently for the Minister's explanations. Lord Francis Egerton moved the address, giving the key-note of the Ministerial plans by declaring that his own opinions on the corn laws had undergone a complete alteration, and imploring the House to come to "a full, satisfactory, and final settlement of the question." Mr. Beckett Denison, who seconded the motion, declared that experience had "driven" him to the same conclusion.

Sir Robert Peel then rose. He said that the immediate cause which had led to the dissolution of the Government was "that great and mysterious calamity which caused a lamentable failure in an article of food on which great numbers of the people in this part of the United Kingdom, and still larger numbers in the sister kingdom, depended mainly for their subsistence." But he added, "I will not assign to that cause too much weight. I will not withhold the homage which is due to the progress of reason, and to truth, by denying that my opinions on the subject of protection have undergone a change." This announcement was received in profound silence from the Ministerial benches, but with triumphant cheering from the opposition. Protection, he said, was not a labourer's question. High prices did not produce high wages, nor *vice versâ*. In the last three years, with low prices and abundance of food, wages were comparatively high, and labour was in demand. In the three years preceding, with high prices and scarcity, wages were low, and employment was scarce. Experience thus proved that wages were ruled by abundance of capital and demand for labour, and did not vary with the price of provisions. Again, increased freedom of trade was favourable to the prosperity of our commerce. In three scarce and dear years, namely, from 1839 to 1841, our foreign exports fell off from £53,000,000 in value to £47,000,000. But in three years of reduction of duties and low prices, namely, from 1842 to 1844, the value of our exports rose from £47,000,000 to £58,000,000. Even deducting the amount of the China trade, a similar result was shown. Nor was the reduction in the customs' duties unfavourable to the revenue. In 1842 there was an estimated loss of £1,500,000; in 1843 a smaller one of £273,000; but in 1845 there was a reduction at an estimated loss to the revenue of no less than £2,500,000. The total amount of the various reductions effected in three years exceeded £4,000,000; and many of the duties were totally abolished; the loss, therefore, not being compensated by any increased consumption. Had £4,000,000 been lost to the revenue? He believed that on the 5th of April next the revenue would be found to be more buoyant than ever. Sir Robert Peel referred to other proofs of prosperity resulting from reduced import duties, and then adverted to his own position, and declared that "he would not hold office on a servile tenure."

The evening of the 27th of January was fixed for the

Minister's general statement upon the commercial policy of the Government. Sir Robert proposed the reduction of the duty on Russian tallow from 3s. 2d. to 1s. 6d.; the abolition of duty on the coarser fabrics of linen, cotton, and woollen, and the reduction on the finer from 20 to 10 per cent.; on French brandy and Geneva, a reduction from 22s. 10d. to 15s.; on foreign free-grown Muscovada sugar, a reduction from 9s. 4d. to 5s. 10d.; and on clayed 11s. 10d. to 8s.; the admission of Indian corn and buckwheat duty free; on butter, the duty to be reduced from 20s. to 10s.; and on cheese, from 10s. to 5s.; the duty on live animals, and fresh and salted meats, pork, and vegetables, to be abolished. As to corn, in lieu of the then sliding scale, he proposed that when the average price of wheat was 48s., the duty should fall by 1s. with every 1s. of rise in price, till on reaching 53s. the duty should be a fixed one of 4s.; that this mitigated scale should last for three years, and, by a positive enactment, to disappear on the 1st of February, 1849, leaving for the future only a nominal rate of duty; and that all British colonial wheat and flour should be forthwith admitted at a nominal rate.

The debate was fixed for the 9th of February, on which day it was moved that the House should resolve itself into a committee on the propositions of the Government. Mr. P. Miles moved, as an amendment, that the House should go into committee on that day twelvemonth. The debate occupied twelve nights, in the course of which every species of vituperation was hurled at the Minister by the monopolist party. Mr. Beresford Hope denounced him as an apostate. Major Fitzmaurice thought the farmers might as well die by the manly system of Mr. Cobden as by the mince-meal interference of the right hon. baronet. Another member compared the Minister to a counsel who, after taking a fee for advocating one side, took the other when the case came into court. Mr. Disraeli attacked with great vehemence and bitterness the Ministerial proposals, and pointed to the "sad spectacle" of the Minister surrounded by a majority who, while they give him their votes, protest in their speeches against his policy. Lord G. Bentinck, who, in the many years he had hitherto been in Parliament, had never before taken part in any debate of importance, surprised the House on the last night of the debate, by delivering a long and elaborate speech against the measure, in which he charged the Minister with "swindling" and deception—a speech which at once marked him out for one of the leaders of the new opposition.

On the fifth night of the debate Sir R. Peel rose to speak in defence of his policy against these attacks of his enemies. It was already ten o'clock, and the House listened to him for three hours. He spoke with remarkable warmth and energy, and overpowered his opponents with the unanswerable truths of political economy, and with humorous demonstrations of the fallacies in which the Protectionist speakers had indulged. In concluding, he said, "This night is to decide between the policy of continued relaxation of restriction, or the return to restraint and prohibition. This night you will select

the motto which is to indicate the commercial policy of England. Shall it be 'Advance!' or 'Recede!'" But the last words of his speech, in which he exhorted the House to strengthen his hands on the grounds of humanity and justice to the people, are those which best deserve to be recorded in this history:—

"It seems," he said, "to be incident to great prosperity that there shall be a reverse—that the time of depression shall follow the season of excitement and success. That time of depression must, perhaps, return; and its return may be coincident with scarcity caused by unfavourable seasons.* Gloomy winters, like those of 1841 and 1842, may again set in. Are those winters effaced from your memory? From mine they never can be. Surely, you cannot have forgotten with what earnestness and sincerity you re-echoed the deep feelings of a gracious Queen, when at the opening and at the close of each session she expressed the warmest sympathy with the sufferings of her people, and the warmest admiration of their heroic fortitude. These sad times may recur. 'The years of plenteousness may have ended,' and 'the years of dearth may have come;' and again you may have to offer the unavailing expressions of sympathy, and the urgent exhortations to patient resignation. Commune with your own hearts, and answer me this question: will your assurances of sympathy be less consolatory—will your exhortations to patience be less impressive—if, with your willing consent, the corn laws shall have then ceased to exist? Will it be no satisfaction to you to reflect, that by your own act you have been relieved from the grievous responsibility of regulating the supply of food? Will you not then cherish with delight the reflection that, in this the present hour of comparative prosperity, yielding to no clamour, impelled by no fear—except, indeed, that provident fear, which is the mother of safety—you had anticipated the evil day, and, long before its advent, had trampled on every impediment to the free circulation of the Creator's bounty? When you are again exhorting a suffering people to fortitude under their privations; when you are telling them, 'These are the chastenings of an all-wise and merciful Providence, sent for some inscrutable but just and beneficent purpose—it may be, to humble our pride, or to punish our unfaithfulness, or to impress us with the sense of our own nothingness and dependence on His mercy;' when you are thus addressing your suffering fellow-subjects, and encouraging them to bear without repining the dispensations of Providence, may God grant that, by your decision of this night, you may have laid in store for yourselves the consolation of reflecting that such calamities are, in truth, the dispensations of Providence—that they have not been caused, they have not been aggravated by laws of man restricting, in the hour of scarcity, the supply of food!"

The division took place on the 27th (or rather on the 28th) of February, at twenty minutes to three in the morning, when the numbers for the motion were—337; against it, 240; leaving a majority for going into committee of 97.

This great debate was interrupted by a motion brought on by Mr. O'Connell, on the impending famine in Ireland, which is chiefly memorable for a speech of Mr. Bright, in which, alluding to Sir R. Peel's last address to the House, he said, "I watched the right honourable baronet go home last night, and I confess I envied him the ennobling feelings which must have filled his breast after delivering that speech—a speech, I venture to say, more powerful and more to be admired than any speech ever heard in this House within the memory of any man in it." A further eloquent allusion to the Minister's newly acquired freedom from the enthrallment of the bigoted among his party, had a powerful effect upon the House, and it was observed by those who sat near Sir R. Peel that the tears started to his eyes at this unexpected generosity from his old opponent.

On the 1st of March, Mr. Villiers adhering to his principle, brought forward the last of those annual motions for immediate repeal, which had contributed so powerfully to undermine the corn laws. After a spirited debate of two evenings, in the course of which Mr. Cobden warned the monopolist party that a protracted resistance would compel the Anti-Corn-Law League to maintain its agitation and concentrate its energies, the House rejected the motion by a majority of 267 to 78.

On the 27th of March, after a powerful address from Sir R. Peel, the Corn Importation Bill was read a second time—the House, on division, showing a majority for the second reading of 302 to 214. Three nights' debate took place on the third reading, in the course of which the Protectionists contended with undiminished obstinacy for the maintenance of the landlords' monopoly. The third reading was finally carried at four o'clock in the morning of Saturday, May 16th,* the numbers being 327 for the bill; against it, 229; leaving a majority for the Government of 98.

During the course of this debate, Sir Robert Peel again delivered one of those effective addresses in favour of free trade which so largely increased his popularity throughout the country. "My earnest wish," he said, in concluding, "has been, during my tenure of power, to impress the people of this country with a belief that the Legislature was animated by a sincere desire to frame its legislation upon the principles of equity and justice. I have a strong belief that the greatest object which we or any other government can contemplate, should be to elevate the social condition of that class of the people with whom we are brought into no direct relationship by the exercise of the elective franchise. I wish to convince them that our object has been so to apportion taxation, that we shall relieve industry and labour from any undue burden, and transfer it, so far as is consistent with the public good, to those who are better enabled to bear it. I look to the present peace of this country; I look to the absence of all disturbance—to the non-existence of any commitment for a seditious offence;

* Prentice's "History of the League," vol. ii., page 248.

I look to the calm that prevails in the public mind; I look to the absence of all disaffection; I look to the increased and growing public confidence on account of the course you have taken in relieving trade from restrictions, and industry from unjust burdens; and where there was dissatisfaction I see contentment; where there was turbulence I see there is peace; where there was disloyalty I see there is loyalty; I see a disposition to confide in you, and not to agitate questions that are at the foundations of your institutions. Deprive me of power to-morrow, you can never deprive me of the consciousness that I have exercised the powers committed to me from no corrupt or interested motives—from no desire to gratify ambition, or attain any personal object; that I have laboured to maintain peace abroad consistently with the national honour, and defending every public right—to increase the confidence of the great body of the people in the justice of your decisions, and by means of equal laws to dispense with all coercive powers—to maintain loyalty to the throne, and attachment to the Constitution, from a conviction of the benefit that will accrue to the great body of the people.”

In the House of Lords the second reading was carried on the 28th of May by a majority of 47, and the bill was finally passed on the 25th of June. But the downfall of the Peel Ministry was inevitable. In a letter to the Duke of Wellington, of the 18th of February, Lord Stanley had said that, whatever might be the result of the Corn Bill, the days of the existing Government were numbered, and that the confidence of his party in Sir Robert Peel had been so shaken, “that, in spite of his pre-eminent abilities and great services, he could never reunite it under his guidance.”

The history of the final defeat of the Peel Administration, which followed upon the triumphant completion of his fiscal reforms, belongs to another period of this history; but we may glance forward at the last speech delivered by Sir Robert Peel before he left office, in which he spoke of these events in words which can never be omitted from the history of the times. He said: “With reference to honourable gentlemen opposite, I must say, as I say with reference to ourselves, neither of us is the party which is justly entitled to the credit of those measures. There has been a combination of parties, and that combination, and the influence of Government, have led to their ultimate success; but the name which ought to be, and will be, associated with the success of those measures, is the name of the man who, acting, I believe, from pure and disinterested motives, has, with untiring energy, by appeals to reason, enforced their necessity with an eloquence the more to be admired because it was unaffected and unadorned—the name which ought to be associated with the success of those measures, is the name of Richard Cobden. Sir, I now close the address which it has been my duty to make to the House, thanking them sincerely for the favour with which they have listened to me in performing the last act of my official career. Within a few hours, pro-

bably, that favour which I have held for the period of five years will be surrendered into the hands of another—without repining—I can say without complaint—with a more lively recollection of the support and confidence I have received than of the opposition which, during a recent period, I have met with. I shall leave office with a name severely censured, I fear, by many who, on public grounds, deeply regret the severance of party ties—deeply regret that severance, not from interest or personal motives, but from the firm conviction that fidelity to party engagements—the existence and maintenance of a great party—constitutes a powerful instrument of government. I shall surrender power severely censured also by others who, from no interested motives, adhere to the principle of protection, considering the maintenance of it to be essential to the welfare and interests of the country. I shall leave a name execrated by every monopolist who, from less honourable motives, clamours for protection because it conduces to his own individual benefit; but it may be that I shall leave a name sometimes remembered with expressions of good-will in the abodes of those whose lot it is to labour, and to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow, when they shall recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it is no longer leavened by the sense of injustice.”

The League met on the 2nd of July, and resolved that an Act of Parliament having been passed providing for the abolition of the corn laws in February, 1849, it was expedient to suspend active operations, and to take steps for closing its affairs with as little delay as possible. “If Sir Robert Peel,” said Mr. Cobden, at that meeting, “has lost office, he has gained a country. For my part, I would rather descend into private life with that last measure of his which led to his discomfiture in my hand, than mount to the highest pinnacle of human power.”

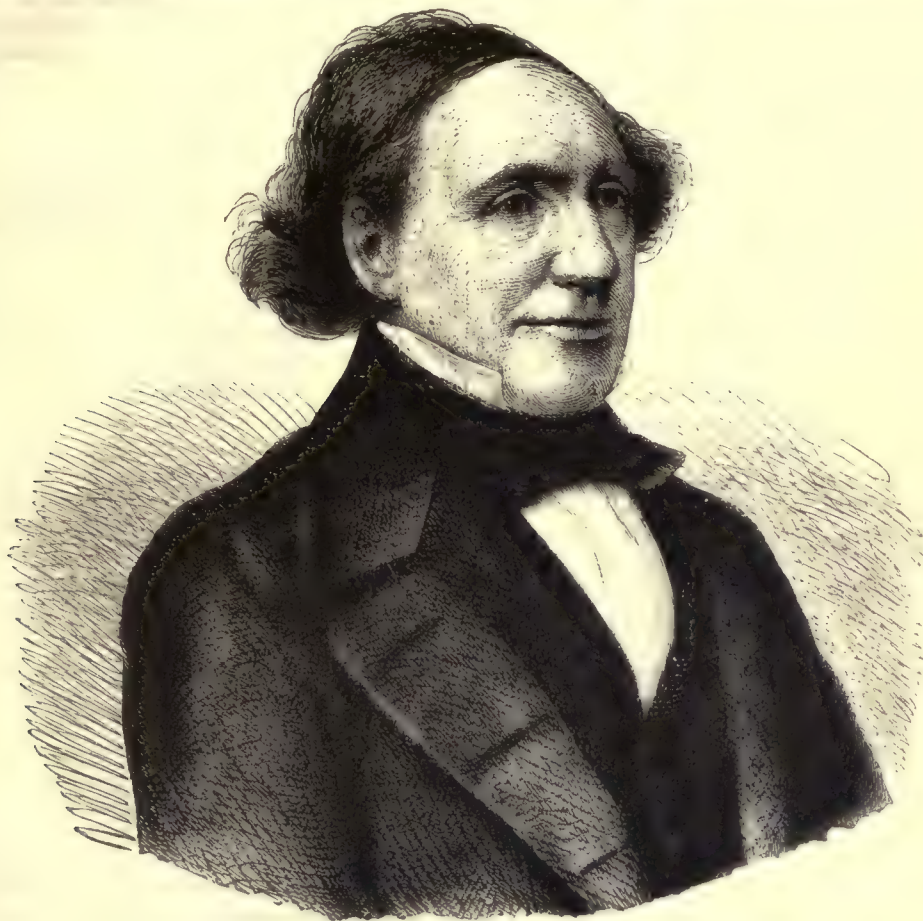
The subscribers to the League Fund were called upon only for an instalment of the £250,000 which they had determined to raise. Out of that fund they voted to Mr. James Wilson, their chairman, a sum of £10,000. Subsequently a collection was set on foot, which terminated in the presentation to Mr. Cobden of a sum of £80,000, in acknowledgment of his great personal sacrifices, and also to set him free for the political service of his country.

No greater proof of how far even a reformed Parliament was from duly representing the people could be afforded than the contrast between the general conviction that had prevailed, from the first announcement of these measures, of the Minister's approaching downfall, with his wide-spread popularity as shown in that latest mirror of public opinion—the daily and weekly press. In the course of our narrative we shall have to show the important effects of these measures upon the welfare of the country, continued and completed as they have been by the ablest of those statesmen who served with Sir Robert Peel, and acknowledged him as their guide and example.

CHAPTER LX.

The Repeal Agitation—Debate in the Dublin Corporation—O'Connell in Conciliation Hall—The Temperance Movement—The "Monster Meetings"—The Roman Catholic Bishops all Repealers—O'Connell's Defence of the Army at Tara—Debates in Parliament—Speech of the Dublin Recorder—Dismissal of the Repeal Magistrates—Motion on the Subject by Lord Clanricarde—Speech of the Duke of Wellington on the Repeal Agitation—Speech of Lord Brougham on the Evils of Irish Agitation—Motion by Mr. Smith O'Brien—Speech of Lord Elliot—The Irish Arms Bill passed—The Repeal Agitation denounced in the Speech from the Throne—Revolutionary Scheme of the Repeal Association—Arbitration Courts Established—The Teetotal Organisation—Proposed Monster Meeting at Clontarf—Forbidden by Proclamation—Military Preparations of the Government—Counter-Proclamation by O'Connell—Arrest of O'Connell and his Colleagues—O'Connell becomes Pacific and Con-

of the Dublin Corporation, gave notice that, on the 21st of that month, he would move a resolution, affirming the right of Ireland to a resident Parliament, and the necessity of repealing the Union. Alderman Butt expressed his determination of opposing the motion. Mr. Butt was one of the ablest members of the Irish bar, and a leader of the Conservative party. The debate was therefore anticipated with the greatest interest, as it promised to be a very exciting political duel. The old Assembly House, since abandoned for the more commodious City Hall, was densely crowded by the principal citizens, while the street was thronged by the populace



JAMES WHITESIDE, ESQ., Q.C.

ciliatory—The Monster Trial and its Incidents—The Repeal Martyrs in Prison—Judgment Reversed by the House of Lords—Liberation of the Prisoners—Triumphal Procession—Speech of O'Connell—Rejoicings in the Country—Effect of the Imprisonment on O'Connell's Mind and Policy—Mr. Smith O'Brien—"Young Ireland"—Rupture in the Association—The Irish Confederation—Reception of O'Connell in London—Discussions in Parliament on the State of Ireland—Speech of Sir Robert Peel—The Queen.

THE Repeal Agitation in Ireland, which had been thoroughly organised in 1842, by "Repeal Missionaries" who had visited every parish in the country, reached its culminating point in 1843. Early in February that year Mr. O'Connell, who had filled the civic chair the previous year, and was then an alderman

during the debate. Mr. O'Connell marshalled his arguments under many heads: Ireland's capacity for independence—her right to have a Parliament of her own—the establishment of that right in 1782—the prosperity that followed—the incompetence of the Irish Parliament to destroy the constitution—the corrupt means by which the Union was carried—its disastrous results, and the national benefits that would follow its repeal. The speech, which lasted four hours, was mainly argumentative and statistical. It was accepted by his followers as an elaborate and masterly statement of the case. Mr. Butt replied with equal ability and more

fervid eloquence. The debate was adjourned. Next day other members took part in it. It was again adjourned, and as the contest proceeded, the public excitement rose to fever heat. At two o'clock on the third day Mr. O'Connell rose to reply. "No report," says his enthusiastic admirer, Mr. O'Neil Daunt, "could possibly do justice to that magnificent reply. The consciousness of a great moral triumph seemed to animate his voice, his glance, and his gestures. Never had I heard him so eloquent, never had I witnessed so noble a display of his transcendent powers." On a division, the numbers were 41 against 15 in favour of a domestic legislature.

A writer who was personally acquainted with O'Connell gives the following picture of the great agitator as he appeared in 1843:—"Let the reader," he says, "imagine a tall man, of massive shape, with broad shoulders, large chest, a full, good-humoured face, fresh complexion, the expanded forehead, broad chin, and compressed mouth indicating command, but the rather short nose not quite in keeping. The glance of his eye was keen, but it had a somewhat cunning expression. He wore a wig, and generally appeared abroad in a large military cloak. In the days of his prime and vigour, he strode along the streets with a bold, firm step; but in 1843 time and toil had told upon his constitution: his limbs had grown stiff, his step infirm, and his figure slightly stooped. On Mondays he might be seen regularly, about the same hour, proceeding from his residence in Merrion Square to Conciliation Hall, at the Corn Exchange, Burgh Quay, accompanied by one or two of his sons, or some intimate friends. At this time the Hall was generally crowded to excess. At the head was the chair, in an elevated position; on the right and in front a platform for the speakers and leading actors in the movement, in the midst of whom appeared pre-eminent the bulky and commanding figure of the great chief himself, to whom all looked up with admiration and deference. Under the chair in front was a place for the secretaries and reporters, and at each side benches for the audience, while a number of the female sex generally appeared in the galleries. First Mr. O'Connell moved some gentleman to the chair, and then read the voluminous correspondence, banding in the abundant remittances, uttering compliments to the writers and contributors with admirable tact as he went along—exhausting all the eulogistic superlatives in the language when he read the productions of the priests, especially the bishops. After these preliminary matters were disposed of, he delivered the speech of the day. His language at this time did not flow as smoothly and freely as it had done in former days, when his marvellous eloquence, varying from the tenderest pathos to the most withering sarcasm, came forth with an ease and force which proved him to be the most powerful and inexhaustible, though not the most graceful or finished, orator of the day. In this respect Sheil bore about the same relation to him that Sheridan did to Fox, or Canning to Pitt." *

Other speakers followed, and the proceedings terminated by the announcement of the receipt of "the rent" for the day. It has been remarked that the "monster meetings" could never have been conducted in the orderly manner for which they were distinguished, but for the Temperance reform which had been effected by Father Mathew, a benevolent, tolerant, and single-minded friar from Cork, who was known as the Apostle of Temperance, and who had induced vast numbers from all parts of the country to take the pledge, which the majority religiously kept for some years. The monster meetings, of which forty-five were held during the year, were vast assemblages whose numbers it was difficult to calculate, but they varied from 20,000 to 100,000 each. The people, generally well-dressed, came crowding to the appointed place from every direction, some on horseback, some on jaunting cars and carts, generally preceded by bands with immense banners, and sometimes marching in military order. O'Connell, the "uncrowned monarch," as his followers called him, arrived from Dublin, sitting on the dicky of a coach, usually drawn by four horses. He was always accompanied by his devoted friend, Tom Steel, the "head pacificator," one of the most ardent of hero worshippers, who looked up to his chief as a sort of demi-god. The first of the monster meetings was held at Trim, in the County Meath, on the 19th of March, and was said to have been attended by about 30,000 persons. A dinner took place in the evening, at which Mr. O'Connell delivered an exciting speech. Referring to the bright eyes and hardy look of the multitudes that surrounded him that day, he asked, would they be everlasting slaves? They would answer "No," and he would join in the response, and say, "I shall be either in my grave or be a free man. Idle sentiments will not do. It will not do to say you like to be free. The man who thinks and does not act upon his thoughts is a scoundrel, who does not deserve to be free." The monster meeting held at Mullingar on the 14th of May (Sunday) was attended by Dr. Cantwell and Dr. Higgins, two Roman Catholic bishops, and a great number of priests. This was one of the largest of the meetings, and was remarkable for the declaration made by Dr. Higgins, to the effect that "every Roman Catholic bishop in Ireland, without exception, was a Repealer. He defied all the Ministers of England to put down the agitation. If they prevented them from assembling in the open fields, they would retire to their chapels, and suspend all other instruction, in order to devote all their time to teaching the people to be Repealers. They were even ready to go to the scaffold for the cause of their country, and bequeath its wrongs to their successors." This outburst excited tumultuous applause, the whole assembly rising and cheering for a considerable time.

During the summer, meetings of a similar character were held at Cork, Longford, Drogheda, Kilkenny, Malo, Dundalk, Baltinglass, Tara, and other places. At Tara, in the County Meath, on the 15th of August, an immense multitude was assembled—250,000, at the lowest estimate, but represented by the Repeal journals as four times that number. The place was selected because of its associa-

* "Cassell's History of Ireland," vol. iii., p. 30.

tion with the old nationality of the country, where its ancient kings were elected and crowned. O'Connell's speech on this occasion was defiant in tone, and in the highest degree inflammatory. Referring to a speech of the Duke of Wellington, he said, "The Duke of Wellington is now talking of attacking us, and I am glad of it. The Queen's army is the bravest army in the world, but I feel it to be a fact, that Ireland, roused as she is at the present moment, would, if they made war upon us, furnish women enough to beat the whole of the Queen's forces." The Lord Chancellor Sugden having recently deprived of the commission of the peace all magistrates who were members of the Repeal Association, Mr. O'Connell announced that the dismissed magistrates would be appointed by the Repeal Association as arbitrators to settle all disputes among the people, who were not again to go to the petty sessions. He pronounced the Union to be null, to be obeyed as an injustice supported by law, until they had the royal authority to set the matter right, and substitute their own Parliament. In his speech after dinner to a more select audience, he said that the statesman was a driveller who did not recollect the might that slumbers in a peasant's arm, and who expected that 700,000 such men would endure oppression for ever. An outbreak would surely come, though not in his time, and then the Government and gentry would weep, in tears of blood, their want of consideration and kindness to the country whose people could reward them amply by the devotion of their hearts and the vigour of their arms. What were the gentry afraid of? It could not be of the people, for they were under the strictest discipline. No army was ever more submissive to its general than the people of Ireland were to the wishes of a single individual.

While the agitation was going forward in this manner in Ireland, the state of that country was the subject of repeated and animated debates in Parliament. One of the remedies proposed by the Government was an Arms Bill, which was opposed with great vehemence by the Irish Liberal members. Mr. Shaw, the Recorder of Dublin, in his speech on the second reading, described the condition of Ireland from the Conservative point of view; he considered that the country was in an alarming state, the lower classes extensively agitated, and the higher unusually dejected and depressed. Even the great benefit of the temperance movement had brought with it the evil of an organisation now turned to the most dangerous purposes. The real object of the Repeal agitation was to array the people and the priesthood against the property of the country. There was no class more alarmed at the progress of the movement than the respectable portion of the Roman Catholics, who dreaded lest they should be swept away by the tide. If the law did not put down the agitation, the agitation would put down the constitution. Mr. C. Buller's remedy was "to *Canadianise*" Ireland, which meant to make Mr. O'Connell Attorney-General, and substitute the titulars for the clergy of the Establishment. Mr. Roebuck thought "there was no great difference between the late and the present Government. Neither of them had put

down the giant evil of Ireland, her rampant Church. He would take away her revenue, and give it, if to any Church at all, to the Church of the Roman Catholics. The grand evil and sore of Ireland was the domination of the Church of the minority."

In the House of Lords several discussions took place on the dismissal of the Repeal magistrates. Lord Clanricarde, on the 14th of July, moved resolutions declaring that act of the Lord Chancellor "unconstitutional, unjust, and inexpedient." The Duke of Wellington met the motion by a direct negative. "These meetings," he said, "consisting of 10,000, 20,000, or 100,000 men—no matter the number of thousands—having been continued, I wish to know with what object they were continued? With a view to address Parliament to repeal the Union? No, my lords; they were continued in order to obtain the desired repeal of the Union by the terror of the people, and, if not by terror, by force and violence; and the persons calling these meetings were magistrates, the very men who must have been employed by the Government to resist such terror and violence, and to arrest those who were guilty of such breaches of the peace. That is the ground on which the Lord Chancellor of Ireland said to the magistrates, 'You must be dismissed if you attend, or invite attendance at such meetings.' The meetings were attended by large numbers in military array, dispersed at the word of command; threats were held out, 'Blood or Repeal,' and such inscriptions were emblazoned on flags. My lords, I have had some experience in the course of a long life spent in the service of the sovereigns of this country—I say, I have had some experience in these revolutions. A distinguished author, who has written on France, has said, '*On conspire sur la place.*' There was no secrecy in the transactions. The reason was that the great means of operation was terror—deception as to their followers, and terror towards their adversaries; and when a learned gentleman declares that Napoleon had not in Russia such an army as there is here, and the Duke of Wellington had not such a one at Waterloo, why, very possibly not. My lords, nay more, mind what he said respecting the organisation of this army, and the means of assembling the population. He said that, in one night, he could collect the whole of his forces; and of that I have no doubt. It was therefore the duty of the Government to be prepared for any unfortunate event." The Duke "regretted to learn there was poverty in Ireland; but, he asked, was that poverty relieved by a march of twenty-five and thirty miles a day in spring and summer, to hear seditious speeches? Was poverty relieved by subscribing to the Repeal rent?" The resolutions were negatived by a majority of 91 to 29.

In a subsequent debate, arising out of a petition presented by Lord Roden from 5,000 Ulster Protestants, complaining that they had been prevented from celebrating the Orange anniversary, while the most flagrant breaches of the law were passed over in the case of those who wanted to overthrow the constitution, which the Orangemen were sworn to defend, the Duke of

Wellington, on that occasion, said that "nothing had been neglected by the Government that was necessary to preserve the peace of the country, and to meet all misfortunes and consequences which might result from the violence of the passions of those men who unfortunately guided the multitude in Ireland. He did not dispute the extent of the conspiracy or the dangers resulting from it; he did not deny the assistance received from foreigners of nearly all nations—disturbed and disturbing spirits, who were anxious to have an opportunity of injuring and deteriorating the great prosperity of this country—but he felt confident that the measures adopted by the Government would enable it to resist all, and preserve the peace."

Lord Brougham regarded the state of things in Ireland with the eye of a political philosopher and economist. "It had been said," remarked the noble lord, "that one reason why Ireland did not prosper was, that no capital flowed into the country. This was very true, but no one could be surprised at it, considering the alarming and threatening aspect of affairs in that country. The capitalist naturally objected to send his capital to a country where he does not know that there may not be an outbreak before he gets his first quarter's payment. There is also this other thing which alarms capitalists—they hear these friends of the Irish people boasting of their meetings, and of their being able to command their hundreds of thousands of men. They see the power which they thus boast of used for the purpose of carrying on the most vehement attacks against the Government, and uttering the most violent abuse of the nation to which those capitalists themselves belong. The Celtic capital being little, and the poverty excessive, and the demand of the Celt for the capital of the Saxon being extreme; the wise Celt having for his object to lessen the excessive poverty, and draw some portion of the Saxon capital to supply the Celtic wants; this wise and judicious friend of Ireland, in order to effect his object, deals from one end of the year to the other in the most gross and unrestrained abuse of everything Saxon, and proclaims Saxon England as the determined enemy of Celtic Ireland. This is the Irish way of inducing English capitalists to send over their money to Ireland. Now, your capitalists like large masses of produce, of gold or silver, but not large masses of people—large masses of people, too, who are collected together under a pretence which he knows must necessarily be false. For when a man tells me of his addressing 200,000 men, I find it impossible to believe him. When he tells me that the 200,000 men whom he proposes to address, meet calmly to discuss a great national question, I at once turn with contempt, scorn, and disgust from such a statement, because I know it to be physically impossible that at a meeting composed of such immense numbers anything like discussion can take place. I very well know what that object is, but the capitalist thinks it is for the purpose of breaking the peace. I do not myself believe so. I think that so long as the agitators can hold the issue of those meetings in their hands, they will be the last to risk their own safety. But this system of intimidation is not without its effects.

It deters the lawful and well-disposed from coming forward, and doing their duty to the country, and rallying round the Government. It prevents them from raising their voice, as they would do against Repeal."

Mr. Smith O'Brien, early in July, gave occasion for another great debate on the state of Ireland, by moving that the House resolve itself into a committee for the purpose of taking into consideration the causes of the discontent prevailing there, with a view to the redress of grievances, and the establishment of a system of just and impartial government in that part of the United Kingdom. The honourable gentleman reviewed the history of the country since the Union, discussed the questions of the National Debt and taxation, the Church Establishment, the position of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, Government appointments, coercive acts, and land tenure. Lord Eliot, then Chief Secretary of Ireland, answered his arguments at length. A great number of speakers followed, continuing the debate for five nights. At length the House divided, when the numbers were—against the motion for a committee, 243; for it, 164. The whole of these vexed questions again came up on the 9th of August, when the Irish Arms Bill was set down for the third reading. On this occasion Sir Robert Peel made some remarks, expressing the feeling of his Government with regard to Ireland, declaring that he viewed the state of things there with deep anxiety and pain. He had hoped that there was a gradual abatement of animosity on account of religious differences; that he saw the gradual influence of those laws which removed the political disabilities of Roman Catholics and established civil equality. He thought he saw, in some respects, a great moral and social improvement; that there was a hope of increasing tranquillity, which would cause the redundant and superfluous capital of England, then seeking vent in foreign and precarious speculations, to flow into Ireland. But the agitation had blasted all those hopes.

The third reading of the Arms Bill passed by a majority of 66. It speedily went through the Upper House, and received the royal assent. In the royal speech at the close of the session, there was a very pointed reference made to the state of Ireland. Her Majesty said that she had observed with the deepest concern the persevering efforts made to stir up discontent and disaffection among her subjects in Ireland, and to excite them to demand the repeal of the Union; and from her deep conviction that the Union was not less essential to the attainment of good government in Ireland than to the strength and stability of the empire, it was her firm determination, with the support of Parliament, and under the blessing of Divine Providence, to maintain inviolate that great bond of connection between the two countries. She thus concluded, "I feel assured that those of my faithful subjects who have influence and authority in Ireland, will discourage to the utmost of their power a system of pernicious agitation which disturbs the industry and retards the improvement of that country, and excites feelings of mutual distrust and animosity between different classes of my people."

This royal denunciation of the Repeal movement greatly exasperated O'Connell. He had recently submitted a plan to the Repeal Association, recommended by a committee of which he was chairman, for the restoration of the Irish Parliament. In the document containing this plan, it was declared that the people of Ireland finally insisted upon the restoration of the Irish House of Commons, consisting of 300 representatives, and claimed, in "the presence of the Creator," the right of the Irish people to such restoration, stating that they submitted to the Union as being binding in law, but solemnly denied that it was founded on right, or on constitutional principle, or that it was obligatory on conscience. The franchise was to be household suffrage, and the voting by ballot. It was also provided that the monarch or regent *de jure* in England should be the monarch or regent *de facto* in Ireland. This revolutionary scheme was to be carried into effect, "according to recognised law and strict constitutional principle." The arbitration courts which O'Connell had threatened to set up, in consequence of the superseding of magistrates connected with the Repeal Association, had actually been established; and the Roman Catholic peasantry, forsaking the regular tribunals, had recourse to them for the settlement of their disputes.

The Repeal organisation had therefore become exceedingly formidable, and had been rendered still more so by what O'Connell called "the mighty moral miracle of 5,000,000 men pledged against intoxicating liquors." If he had to go to battle, he said, he should have the strong and steady teetotalers with him. The teetotal bands "would play before them, and animate them in the time of peril; their wives and daughters, thanking God for their sobriety, would be praying for their safety; and he told them there was not an army in the world he could not beat with his teetotalers. Yes, teetotalism was the first sure ground on which rested their hope of sweeping away Saxon domination and giving Ireland to the Irish." O'Connell had been in the habit of wearing a crown-like cap, richly ornamented, which had been presented to him at the monster meeting at the Rath of Mullaghmast, in the County Kildare. This symbol of sovereignty had its effect upon the masses, who began to cherish the idea that they might have ere long a king of their own. It was probably with a view to encourage this idea, and to raise their enthusiasm to the highest pitch, that he resolved to hold the last of the series of monster meetings at Clontarf, near Dublin, the scene of King Brian Borohme's victory over the Danes. This meeting was to be held on Sunday, the 8th of October, and was to be the most imposing of all the demonstrations. But the Government was at last roused to action, and on the previous day a proclamation was issued by the Lord Lieutenant in Council, prohibiting the assembly. The proclamation declared that whereas advertisements and placards had been printed and extensively circulated, calling on those who proposed to attend the meeting to come on horseback, to meet and form in procession, and to march in military order and array; and whereas the object of the meeting was to excite discontent and dis-

affection, hatred and contempt of the Government of the country, and to accomplish alterations in the laws and constitution of the realm, by intimidation and the demonstration of physical force, tending also to serve the ends of factions and seditious persons, and violate the peace, the meeting was strictly prohibited. It was stated that those attending it should be prosecuted, and that effectual measures should be taken for its dispersion.

This was no idle threat; the guards at the castle and at the several barracks were doubled; Alborough House, commanding the road to Clontarf, was garrisoned; the streets and roads at the north side of the city were patrolled by parties of soldiers during the night. Three war steamers were placed in the river, with their guns run out, commanding the ground where the meeting was to be held; while the guns at the Pigeon House fort at the mouth of the river, right opposite Clontarf, were so placed as to sweep the road to it. The village of Clontarf was occupied by the 5th Dragoon Guards, the 60th Rifles, the 11th Hussars, the 54th Regiment of Infantry, and a brigade of Royal Horse Artillery; the infantry being commanded by Colonel Fane, the cavalry by Lord Cardigan, and the artillery by Colonel Higgins. The men and horses were provisioned for twenty-four hours, and each soldier was furnished with sixty rounds of ball cartridge. A crisis had now come; a collision between the troops and O'Connell's army of teetotalers was imminent, and even he could have no doubt of the issue. He seemed to stand appalled on the edge of the precipice to which he had brought his deluded followers, and shrinking from the consequences, he made all possible haste to save them. As soon as the proclamation was issued, he called a special meeting of the Repeal Association, and announced that in consequence of the measures taken by the Government, which he denounced as "the most base and imbecile step ever taken," there would be no meeting at Clontarf the next day. He submitted a counter-proclamation, which was adopted and posted up that evening throughout the city beside the Government proclamation. It was also sent by special messengers to the neighbouring towns and villages. The following is a copy of this curious document:—"Notice.—Whereas there has appeared, under the signature of G. B. Sugden, C. Donoughmore Eliot, F. Blackburne, G. Blakeney, Fred. Shaw, T. B. C. Smith, a paper, being, or purporting to be, a proclamation drawn up in very loose and inaccurate terms, and manifestly misrepresenting known facts, the object of which appears to be to prevent the public meeting intended to be held to-morrow, the 8th instant, at Clontarf, to petition Parliament for the repeal of the hateful and destructive measure of the legislative Union; and whereas such proclamation has not appeared until late in the afternoon of this day, Saturday, the 7th instant; so that it is utterly impossible that the knowledge of its existence could be communicated in the usual official channels, or by the post, in time to have its contents known to the persons intending to meet at Clontarf for the purpose of petitioning as aforesaid;

whereby ill-disposed persons may have an opportunity, under colour of said proclamation, to provoke breaches of the peace, or commit violence on persons intending to proceed peacefully and legally to said intended meeting; we, therefore, the Committee of the Royal National Repeal Association, do most earnestly request and entreat that all well-disposed persons will, immediately on receiving this intimation, repair to their own dwellings, and not place themselves in peril of any collision, or of receiving any ill-treatment whatsoever. And we do further inform such persons that, without yielding in anything to the unfounded allegations in said alleged proclamation, we deem it prudent and wise, and, above all things, humane, to declare that said meeting is abandoned, and is not to be held.—Signed by order. DANIEL O'CONNELL. Saturday, 7th October, 3.30 p.m., 1843."

The preventive measures taken on both sides were completely successful. No mounted Repealers came in from the country, and though vast multitudes went out from Dublin to view the military demonstrations, their meeting with the Queen's forces was quite amicable. They were allowed to see the spectacle, but they were compelled to move on along the high road, which they did very good-humouredly. At a meeting of the Repeal Association held next day, O'Connell said—"I have to express my delight at the conduct of the people yesterday—they were good-humoured and attentive to our instructions. I have also to express my admiration at the exemplary conduct of the soldiery. Nothing could be more proper than their behaviour; but nothing could be more cruel than to keep the poor fellows standing together all day for nothing. And then there was the pride and pomp of the Lord Lieutenant going to review the army. They assail us with the charge of desecrating the Sabbath; but I wonder what the Lord Lieutenant was doing on Sunday, mounted on his pony, prancing down the road? I speak well of the people and of the soldiery, and my swelling heart beats high for the consummation of the liberty of Ireland."

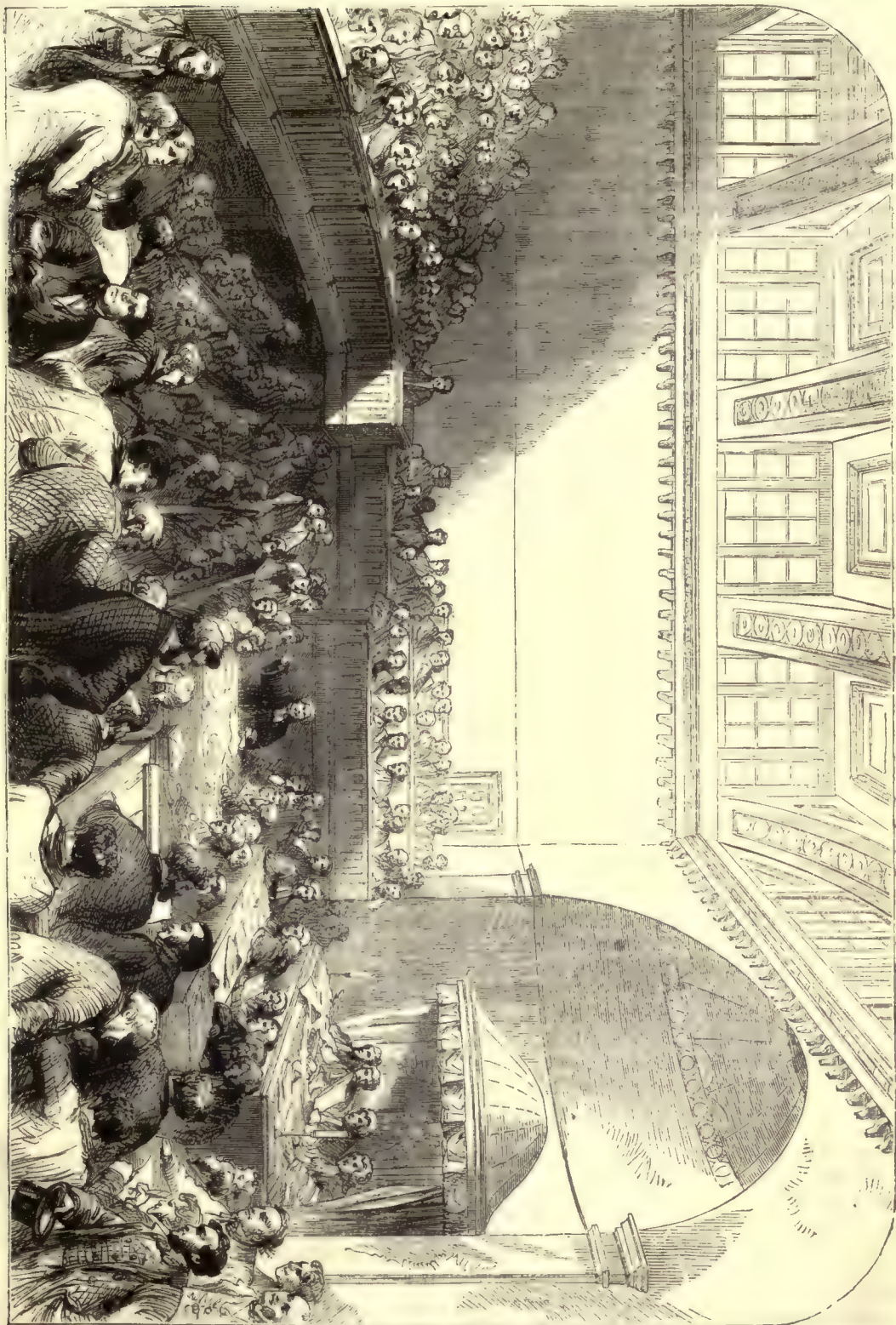
The Government now resolved to follow up the vigorous step they had so tardily taken, by the prosecution of O'Connell and several leading members of the Association. They were arrested in Dublin on the 14th of October, charged with conspiracy, sedition, and unlawful assembly. The other gentlemen included in the prosecution were Mr. John O'Connell, Mr. Thomas Steel, Mr. Ray, Secretary to the Repeal Association, Dr. Gray, proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal*, Mr. C. G. Duffy, editor of the *Nation*, Mr. Barrett, of the *Pilot*, and the Rev. Messrs. Tyrrell and Tierney, Roman Catholic priests. Mr. O'Connell, with his two sons and several friends, immediately on his arrest, went to the house of Mr. Justice Burton, and entered into recognisances, himself in £1,000, with two sureties of £500 each. The tone of Mr. O'Connell was now suddenly changed. From being inflammatory, warlike, and defiant, it became intensely pacific, and he used his utmost efforts to calm the minds of the people, to lay the storm he had raised, and to soothe the feelings he had irritated by angry denuncia-

tions of the "Saxon." That obnoxious word was now laid aside, being, at his request, struck out of the Repeal vocabulary, because it gave offence. Real conciliation was now the order of the day.

The State prosecutions commenced in January, 1844, in the Court of Queen's Bench, before the Lord Chief Justice Penefather, and Justices Burton, Crampton, and Perrin. Besides the Attorney and Solicitor-General, there were ten counsel employed for the Crown, and there was an equal number on the side of the traversers, including Mr. Sheil, Mr. Hatchel, Mr. Moore, Mr. Whiteside, Mr. Monaghan, now Chief Justice, Mr. O'Hagan, and Mr. Macdonogh. This monster trial was remarkable in many respects. It excited the most intense public interest, which pervaded all classes, from the highest to the lowest. It lasted from the 16th of January to the 12th of February; the speech of the Attorney-General occupied two days; the jury list was found to be defective, a number of names having been secretly abstracted; newspaper articles were admitted as evidence against men who never saw them; the Lord Chief Justice betrayed his partiality in charging the jury, by speaking of the traversers as "the other side." The principal witnesses were short-hand writers from London, avowedly employed by the Government to report the proceedings of the monster meetings. Mr. Jackson, reporter for the *Morning Herald*, also placed his notes at the service of the Government. Mr. O'Connell defended himself in a long argument for Repeal, and an attack on the Government. The most brilliant orations delivered on the occasion were those of Sheil and Whiteside. Mr. Fitzgibbon, one of the counsel for the traversers, made a remark offensive to the Attorney-General, Mr. T. C. B. Smith, who immediately handed him a challenge, in the presence of his wife, while the judges had retired for refreshment. The matter was brought before the court, and, after mutual explanations, was allowed to drop.

All the traversers were found guilty. The Attorney-General did not press for judgment against the Rev. Matthew Tierney. Upon the rest Mr. Justice Burton, who was deeply affected, pronounced judgment on the 30th of May, in the following terms:—"With respect to the principal traverser, the Court is of opinion that he must be sentenced to be imprisoned for the space of twelve calendar months; and that he is further to be fined in the sum of £2,000, and bound in his own recognisances in the sum of £5,000, and two sureties in £2,500, to keep the peace for seven years. With respect to the other traversers, we have come to the conclusion that to each shall be allotted the same sentence; which is, that they be imprisoned for the space of nine calendar months, each of them to pay £50 fine, and to enter into their own recognisances of £1,000 each, and two sureties of £500, to keep the peace for seven years."

The prisoners were immediately sent to Richmond Bridewell, on the South Circular Road, where the Governor did all in his power to make them comfortable. Good apartments were assigned to them. They dined together every day, and were permitted to receive, without restriction, the visits of their friends and admirers.



THE STATE TRIAL IN DUBLIN.

The three editors—Dr. Gray, Mr. Duffy, and Mr. Barrett—occupied themselves in writing for their respective journals. Mr. John O'Connell composed a "Repeal Dictionary," which was afterwards published. Tom Steel devoted himself to the study of Kane's "Industrial Resources of Ireland," whose pages he adorned with large notes of admiration. They established for their amusement a *Prison Gazette*, a repartee of wit and fun, which came out every Friday after dinner. They had access to two large gardens connected with the prison, in one of which there was a mound, which they called "Tara Hill," and a summer house, which became "Conciliation Hall." In the other they erected a marquee, which they called "Mullaghmast." The Government was the less disposed to interfere with these indulgences, as their object was not so much punishment as prevention, and besides, the traversers had appealed against the sentence. A majority of the twelve English judges affirmed the judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench, while condemning the counts on which the Irish court relied. An appeal was then made to the House of Lords. The decision was left to the five law lords—Lyndhurst, Brougham, Cottenham, Denman, and Campbell. The first two were for a confirmation of the judgment. Lord Denman, in pronouncing judgment, said, referring to the tampering with the panel, "If such practices as had taken place in the present instance in Ireland should continue, the trial by jury would become a mockery, a delusion, and a snare," a sentence which was hackneyed by repetition for years afterwards. The news of the reversal reached Dublin on the afternoon of the 5th of September. Great crowds had assembled on the pier at Kingstown, and tremendous cheers broke forth from the multitude, when the Holyhead packet approached, and they saw held up a white flag, with the inscription, "Judgment reversed by the House of Lords. O'Connell is free!" The news was everywhere received by the Roman Catholics with wild excitement. Two messengers ran to the prison, and as they rushed forward, out of breath, one cried, "I am first, I am first." The solicitor who brought the news from London, threw his arms about O'Connell's neck, and kissed him, exclaiming—"On the merits, on the merits; no technicalities at all." Mr. O'Connell had that morning received a desponding letter from him, conveying some unpalatable advice, which put the prisoner in bad humour, and made him think very meanly of the character of the adviser. Now, however, he declared him to be one of the best men in existence. In the course of the evening he said to a friend, in a tone of solemnity, "Fitzpatrick, the hand of man is not in this. It is the response given by Providence to the prayers of the faithful, pious, steadfast people of Ireland."

Orders soon came from the Government for the liberation of the prisoners. After some consultation with their friends, it was resolved that there should be a public procession from the prison in the morning. Mr. O'Connell, however, left that evening, and proceeded on foot to his house in Merriion Square. Before he had reached the

square, the tidings spread abroad that he was out, and crowds rapidly assembled from all directions. The people leaped and danced about him, while their acclamations rent the air. When he placed his foot upon the step to ascend to his own door, the exulting shouts of some 10,000 or 15,000 people were almost deafening. Appearing on the balcony of his house, where he had often stood before, to address his followers, they could scarcely be got to keep silence while he spoke. He said, "Why, it seems as if you were glad to see me home again. This house is my own honest home, but I have come home from a prison. In other countries they send the rogues to prison, and leave the honest men at home. Many a paltry rogue was left at home, while I was confined within the walls of a gaol. But God is stronger than our enemies; and thanks be to that God, I am here to-night in my own home. The foul attempt to destroy the sacred right to petition, to violate the jury box, and trample the constitution in my person—that foul and felonious attempt has signally failed. The people of Ireland have gained a mighty victory, and well have they deserved that victory—the moral, the temperate, and the religious people of Ireland. In their 100,000 strength, they were mild as the playful lamb, and such mildness will they show in their might at present. In the meetings of 1843, the glorious meetings of 1843—they called them monster meetings, because such assemblages could not be peacefully collected in any country on earth except our own—not a blow was struck, not a glass of whisky drunk, not even an accident occurred. Oh, it could happen nowhere but amongst the courteous people of Ireland; and now, blessed be God, we are here to-night, rejoicing. We shall have no tumult to-morrow: a little shout we shall have, and some cheering; the happy bird must chirp. Go to your rest, having first offered up your thanksgiving to the Almighty that he has vouchsafed to look in mercy upon his people of Ireland; and I promise you we will have Repeal."

The procession next day was, in point of magnitude, quite in keeping with the other "monster" proceedings. Twelve o'clock was the time appointed to start from the prison, and at that hour the first part of the procession arrived. Its length may be inferred from the fact, that it was not until two o'clock that the triumphal car reached the prison gate. During those two hours thousands upon thousands defiled before it in one unbroken line of men; perfect order being kept, without the aid of a single policeman, and the marching mass being broken into sections only by the bands of music, preceding the flags or carriages of the different trades, which numbered about thirty. The bands were all dressed in fancy uniforms, bearing bright colours—blue, pink, and green—with banners of the most gorgeous description. There was such a demand for carriages and vehicles of all sorts, that Dublin alone could not meet it, and carriages were obtained from Bray, and various other places around the metropolis. The procession was composed of Repeal wardens, members of the Repeal Association, the Lord Mayor, aldermen, and town council—personal friends and political admirers of

O'Connell. "The great climax to the magnificence of the procession," wrote the correspondent of one of the London journals, "was the moment in which Mr. O'Connell, accompanied by his son John, and the Rev. Dr. Miley, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Steel, Mr. Ray, Dr. Gray, and Mr. Barrett, emerged from the prison gates, to take part in it. When they were seen ascending the triumphal car, a shout came forth, so loud, so long, so vehement, and so enthusiastic, that even a man of the firmest nerve must for the moment have felt himself shaken by it. Wherever the eye could reach, the space beneath was occupied by human beings. The shout of those in front of the prison was caught up along the whole line of procession, and for at least five minutes the air seemed to be rent with a thunder-burst of joyful peals, that came reverberating back upon the utterers, making every heart beat quicker. There could not have been less than 500,000 persons gathered together for this national festival."

The triumphal car had been constructed for the chairing of Mr. O'Connell some years before. It was a kind of platform, on which were three stages, rising one above the other like steps, profusely decorated with purple velvet, gold fringe, gilt nails, and painting. Six splendid dappled greys slowly drew the cumbrous vehicle. On the topmost stage, elevated some dozen feet above the crowd, the hero of the day stood erect, wearing the green, gold, and velvet Repeal cap, and bowing incessantly to the cheering multitude. On the other two stages were Dr. Miley and the members of Mr. O'Connell's family, including two grandsons in green velvet tunics, with caps and white feathers, a harper in the ancient minstrel dress, naively playing on his instrument. In the second carriage followed Dr. Gray, Mrs. Gray, and their children; and in the third the other "Repeal martyrs"—some with their ladies and private friends; and finally, the solicitors carrying the "monster indictment." The procession traversed the greater part of Dublin, and did not reach Merrion Square till half-past five o'clock.

Having entered his house, Mr. O'Connell immediately appeared on the balcony, and addressed the people, amidst tremendous cheering, thus:—"This is a great day for Ireland, a day of justice. All that we ever desired was justice; and we have got an instalment of it, at any rate. The plans of the wicked, and the conspiracy of the oppressor—the foul mismanagement of the jury panel—the base conspiracy against the lives, the liberties, and the constitutional rights of the public, have all, blessed be God, been defeated. He had often boasted that those who followed his advice had never been brought into jeopardy, but those who taunted him with that now turned round and said, 'Doctor, cure thyself!' They said he was guilty of a conspiracy. His answer was, they lied. It was not he alone who said that; it was Lord Chief Justice Denman, of the House of Peers, who said it. If he had wished his vanity to be indulged, and to prove his skill as a lawyer, he could not have devised a plan better calculated to effect his object than the events which had occurred." Having threatened to impeach the judges, the Attorney-General, and others concerned in the prosecution, his harangue was cut short by torrents of rain.

The news of his liberation was carried that night by the mail coaches over all parts of the country, and produced extraordinary excitement throughout the south and west, particularly in Cork, which Mr. O'Connell then represented. There the whole population seems to have turned out, some of the streets being so packed, that it was impossible to get along. Processions were soon formed, with bands of music, and green boughs. Even the little children were furnished with the emblems of victory. Along the country roads, too, as well as in the towns and villages, every little cabin had its green boughs stuck up, and its group of inhabitants shouting for "the Liberator." At night, in the towns, every house was illuminated, while bonfires blazed on the mountains, and the horizon seemed on fire in every direction. On the following Sunday the liberation of the prisoners was celebrated in the Metropolitan Church, Dublin. Archbishop Murray sat with his mitre on, and in his grandest robes, on an elevated throne, with crimson canopy. On the opposite side, beneath the pulpit, were chairs of state, on which sat O'Connell and the rest of the "Repeal martyrs." A *Te Deum* was sung for the deliverance of the liberator of his country; a sermon was preached by O'Connell's devoted friend and chaplain, the Rev. Dr. Miley, who ascribed the liberation, not to the law lords, but to the Virgin Mary.

Notwithstanding these rejoicings, however, there is no doubt that the imprisonment completely broke the spirit of O'Connell. During 1843 he had been urged forward by the impetuosity and warlike spirit of the Young Ireland party, and the excitement of the monster meetings seems to have filled his mind with the notion that he could really wield the physical power of the country in an actual contest with the Queen's forces. His prison reflections dissipated all such illusions. The enforced inactivity, at his time of life, of one accustomed to so much labour and to such constant speaking, no doubt affected his health. Probably the softening of the brain, of which he died, commenced about this time. At all events he was thenceforward an altered man, excessively cautious and timid, with a morbid horror of war and blood, and a rooted dislike of the Young Ireland leaders, which the Old Ireland party did all they could to strengthen. Mr. Smith O'Brien had been the Conservative member for the county of Limerick, and had been opposed to the Repeal agitation; but the moment O'Connell was arrested, he joined the association, taking the vacant position of leader, and adopting the policy of the Young Ireland party, which avowedly tended to war and revolution. Boasting of a lineal descent from the conqueror of the Danes at Clontarf, and hailed by some of his admirers as one who had a right to wear his crown, the new convert to Repeal seemed determined to go all lengths for the liberation of his country from the Saxon yoke. O'Connell at first seemed to rejoice in the accession of strength to the cause, but signs of jealousy and dislike were soon manifested. In private there was a marked coolness between the two leaders, and when, at the meetings of the association, any of the Young Ireland orators gave utterance to martial sentiments, they were

promptly called to order by O'Connell; but they revenged themselves by frequently outvoting him in committee, which was a grievous mortification to one so long accustomed to almost absolute rule among his followers. He attended Parliament during the session of 1845-46, diligently performing his duties as a representative, sitting in committees, and taking part in the debates of the House. During his absence the Young Ireland party gained a complete ascendancy in the Repeal Association. Mr. Smith O'Brien, who refused to sit on any committee in the House of Commons not connected with Irish business, and was imprisoned in the cellar for his contumacy, made himself an idol with the revolutionary party at home by his refractory spirit and the perversity of his conduct. The other leaders of that party who exerted the greatest influence were Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy, D'Arcy M'Gee, and Thomas Meagher—all men of superior ability, whose organ, the *Nation*, exerted great influence throughout the country. Ultimately, a series of "peace resolutions," which were proposed in the Repeal Association, pledging its members to abjure the sword as an instrument for redressing the grievances of Ireland, caused an open rupture between the two parties. The Young Irelanders seceded in a body from Conciliation Hall, and established an organisation of their own—"The Irish Confederation." From this time the Repeal rent rapidly fell off, and when O'Connell again returned to Dublin, he found that the spell of his enchantment, once so potent, was broken; and the famine came soon after, to consummate his affliction and break his heart. Before the sad close of his public career had arrived, and pending the issue of the State trial, O'Connell had a proof of the magnanimity of the English people, of those Saxons whose national character he had so often assailed and maligned. When he appeared at one of the Anti-Corn-Law meetings in Covent Garden Theatre, his reception by the assembled multitude is described as one of the most magnificent displays of popular enthusiasm ever witnessed. They remembered only that his jury was packed and his judges prejudiced, and that he had been for thirty years the able and consistent opponent of the corn laws. He declared himself that he was not prepared for such a demonstration, even by the experience of the monster meetings. This great triumph on English ground seemed to infuse new life into the veteran agitator, for his speech on that occasion was one of the finest and most effective he ever delivered.

In the meantime the Irish State trial, and the affairs of Ireland generally, were the subject of frequent discussions in both Houses of Parliament. On the 13th of February the Marquis of Normanby moved a resolution condemnatory of the policy of the Government, contrasting it with his own administration, with the treatment of Canada, and with the liberal policy by which, he said, Austria had conquered disaffection in Lombardy. He was answered by Lord Roden and others, and on a division his motion was rejected by a majority of 175 to 78. On the same day the state of Ireland was introduced by Lord John Russell, in a speech which occupied three hours. The debate which followed was continued by

adjournment for nine days. The principal speakers who took part in it were Mr. Wyse, Sir James Graham, Mr. Young, Sir George Grey, Lord Elliot, Mr. Shaw, the Recorder of Dublin, Lord Howick, Lord Stanley, Mr. Macaulay, Sir William Follett, Sir Thomas Wilde, Sir F. Pollock, the English Attorney-General, Mr. Roebuck, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Sheil, and Sir Robert Peel. The discussion turned mainly upon the question whether or not O'Connell had had a fair trial, and upon this the lawyers and the House pronounced opinions in harmony with the interests of their respective parties. But nearly every topic that could be mentioned was brought up in the course of the monster debate. Sir Robert Peel concluded a long and able speech in defence of his Government with the following beautiful peroration:—"I have a firm conviction that if there were a calm and tranquillity in Ireland, there is no part of the British empire that would make such rapid progress in improvement. There are facilities for improvement and opportunities for it which will make the advance of Ireland more rapid than the advance of any other country. I will conclude, then, by expressing my sincere and earnest hope that this agitation, and all the evil consequences of it, may be permitted to subside; and hereafter, in whatever capacity I may be, I should consider that the happiest day of my life when I could see the beloved Sovereign of these realms fulfilling the fondest wishes of her heart, possessing a feeling of affection towards all her people, but mingling that affection with sympathy and tenderness towards Ireland. I should hail the dawning of that auspicious day, when she could alight like some benignant spirit on the shores of Ireland, and lay the foundations of a temple of peace; when she could, in accents which proceeded from the heart—spoken to the heart rather than to the ear—call upon her Irish subjects of all classes and of all denominations, Protestants and Roman Catholics, Saxon and Celt, to forget the difference of creed and of race, and to hallow that temple of peace which she should then found, with sacrifices still holier than those by which the temples of old were hallowed—by the sacrifice of those evil passions that dishonour our common faith, and prevent the union of heart and hand in defence of our common country."

CHAPTER LXI.

The Irish Crisis, 1846-47—Land Tenure—The Devon Commission—Condition of the Agricultural Labourers—Subdivision of Land—The Conacre System—Partial Failure of the Potatoes in 1845—Total Blight in 1846—Its immediate Effects—Progress of the Famine—Sketches of its Victims—Exertions of the Society of Friends—Human Burrows—Appalling Pictures of Misery and Degradation—The Famine in Ulster, Munster, Cork—Frightful Mortality—The Public Coffin—Demoralising Effects of the Famine—Neglect of the Dead—Abuses in the Distribution of Relief—Universal Mendicity—Intimidation—Estimated Loss on the Failure of the Potato Crop—Government Measures for Relief—Railway Scheme of Lord George Bentinck.

REVERTING to the history of Ireland, we now arrive at the "Irish Crisis," the famine of 1846 and 1847—one of the greatest calamities that ever afflicted any portion of the human race. In order to understand fully the events connected with this visitation, it is necessary to notice

the social condition of the country which rendered its effects so destructive. Ireland had long been in a chronic state of misery, which has been ascribed by the most competent judges to the peculiar state of the land tenure in that country, arising from a series of confiscations and other circumstances in its past history, which are too well known to be dwelt upon in this place. It had often been predicted by writers on the state of Ireland, that, owing to this rottenness at the foundation of the social fabric, it would come down with a crash some day. The facts reported by the Census Commissioners of 1841 showed that this consummation could not be far off. Out of a population of 8,000,000, there were 3,700,000 above the age of five years who could neither read nor write; while nearly three millions and a half lived in mud cabins, badly thatched with straw, having each but one room, and often without either a window or a chimney. These figures indicate a mass of ignorance and poverty which could not be contemplated without alarm, and the subject was, therefore, constantly pressed upon the attention of Parliament. As usual in cases of difficulty, the Government, feeling that something should be done, and not knowing what to do, appointed, in 1845, a commission to inquire into the relations between landlord and tenant, and the condition of the working classes. At the head of this commission was the Earl of Devon, a benevolent nobleman, whose sympathies were on the side of the people. Captain Kennedy, the secretary to the Commissioners, published a digest of the report of the evidence, which presented the facts in a readable form, and was the means of diffusing a large amount of authentic information on the state of Ireland. The Commissioners travelled through the country, held courts of inquiry, and examined witnesses of all classes. As the result of their extensive intercourse with the farming classes and their own observations, they were enabled to state that in almost every part of Ireland unequivocal symptoms of improvement, in spite of many embarrassing and counteracting circumstances, continually presented themselves to the view, and that there existed a very general and increasing spirit and desire for the promotion of such improvement, from which the most beneficial results might fairly be expected. Indeed, speaking of the country generally, they add: "With some exceptions, which are unfortunately too notorious, we believe that at no former period did so active a spirit of improvement prevail; nor could well-directed measures for the attainment of that object have been proposed with a better prospect of success than at the present moment."

But this improvement produced no sensible effect upon the mass of labouring people. However brightly the sun of prosperity might gild the eminences of society, the darkness of misery and despair settled upon the masses below. The Commissioners proceed:—"A reference to the evidence of most of the witnesses will show that the agricultural labourer of Ireland continues to suffer the greatest privations and hardships; that he continues to depend upon casual and precarious employment for subsistence; that he is still badly housed,

badly fed, badly clothed, and badly paid for his labour. Our personal experience and observation during our inquiry have afforded us a melancholy confirmation of these statements; and we cannot forbear expressing our strong sense of the patient endurance which the labouring classes have generally exhibited under sufferings greater, we believe, than the people of any other country in Europe have to sustain."* It was deeply felt that the well-being of the whole United Kingdom depended upon the removal of the causes of this misery and degradation; for if the Irish people were not elevated, the English working classes must be brought down to their level. The facility of travelling afforded by railways and steam-boats caused such constant intercourse between England and Ireland, that Irish ignorance, beggary, and disease, with all their contagion, physical and moral, would be found intermingling with the British population. It would be impossible to prevent the half-starved Irish peasantry from crossing the Channel, and seeking employment even at low wages, and forming a pestiferous Irish quarter in every town and city. The question then was felt to be one whose settlement would brook no further delay.

It was found that the potato was almost the only food of the Irish millions, and that it formed their chief means of obtaining the other necessities of life. A large portion of this crop was grown under the con-acre system, to which the poorest of the peasantry were obliged to have recourse, notwithstanding the minute subdivision of land. There were in 1841, 691,000 farms in Ireland exceeding one acre in extent. Nearly one-half of these were under five acres each. The number of proprietors in fee was estimated at 8,000—a smaller number in proportion to the extent of territory than in any other country of Western Europe except Spain. In Connaught, several proprietors had 100,000 acres each, the proportion of small farms being greater there than in the rest of Ireland. The total number of farms in the province was 155,842, and of these 100,254 consisted of from one to five acres. If all the proprietors were resident among their tenantry, and were in a position to encourage their industry and care for their welfare, matters would not have been so bad; but most of the large landowners were absentees. It frequently happened that the large estates were held in strict limitation, and they were nearly all heavily encumbered. The owners preferred living in England or on the Continent, having let their lands on long leases or in perpetuity to "middlemen," who sublet them for as high rents as they could get. Their tenants again sublet, so that it frequently happened that two, three or four landlords intervened between the proprietors and the occupying tenant, each deriving an interest from the land. The head landlord therefore, though ever so well-disposed, had no power whatever to help the occupying tenants generally, and of those who had the power, very few felt disposed. There were extensive districts without a single resident proprietor, and when the absentees were appealed to by the

* "Parliamentary Reports," 1846, vol. xix., p. 12.

local relief committees during the famine to assist the perishing people, they seldom took the trouble of answering the application.

The minute subdivision of land which placed the population in a state of such complete dependence upon the potato was first encouraged by the landlords, in order to multiply the number of voters, and increase their parliamentary interest; but subsequently, as the population increased, it became in a great measure the work of the people themselves. The possession of land afforded the only certain means of subsistence, and a farm was therefore divided among the sons of the family, each one, as he was married—which happened early—receiving some share, and each daughter also often getting a slice as her marriage-portion. In vain were clauses against sub-letting inserted in leases; in vain was the erection of new houses prohibited; in vain did the landlord threaten the tenant. The latter relied upon the sympathy of his class to prevent ejectment, and on his own ingenuity to defeat the other impediments to his favourite mode of providing for his family. This process was at length carried to an extreme that became perfectly ludicrous. Instead of each sub-tenant or assignee of a portion of the farm receiving his holding in one compact lot, he obtained a part of each particular quality of land, so that his tenement consisted of a number of scattered patches, each too small to be separately fenced, and exposed to the constant depredations of his neighbours' cattle, thus affording a fruitful source of quarrels, and utterly preventing the possibility of any improved system of husbandry. Lord George Hill stated, among other facts relating to land held in this way, that is, held in "rundale," that one person held his farm in forty-two different patches, and at last gave it up in despair of finding it, and that a field of half an acre was held by twenty-two different persons. It frequently happened where land was held in rundale, or otherwise extensively subdivided, that the landlord refused to recognise any of the tenants but one, who was made responsible for the whole rent, and might be forced to pay the arrears really due by his idle partners.* These small patches, however, were not numerous enough to afford "potato gardens" for the still increasing population, and hence arose the con-acre system, by which those who occupied no land were enabled to grow potatoes for themselves. Tempted by the high rent, which varied from £8 to £14 an acre without manure, the farmers gave to the cottiers in their neighbourhood the use of their land merely for the potato crop, generally a quarter of an Irish acre to each. On this the cottier put all the manure he could make by his pig, or the children could scrape off the road during the year, and "planted" his crop of potatoes, which he relied upon as almost the sole support of his family. On it he also fed the pig, which paid the rent, or procured clothes and other necessities if he had been permitted to pay the rent with his own labour. The labourer thus became a commercial speculator in potatoes. He mortgaged his labour for part of the

ensuing year for the rent of his field. If his speculation proved successful, he was able to replace his capital, to fatten his pig, and to support himself and his family, while he cleared off his debt to the farmer. If it failed, his former savings were gone, his heap of manure had been expended to no purpose, and he had lost the means of rendering his pig fit for the market. But his debt to the farmer still remained, and the scanty wages which he could earn at some periods of the year were reduced, not only by the increased number of persons looking for work, but also by the ability of the farmers to employ them. Speculation in potatoes, whether on a large or small scale, had always been hazardous in the southern and westerly portions of Ireland. There had been famines from the failure of that crop at various times, and a remarkably severe one in 1822, when Parliament voted £300,000 for public works and other relief purposes, and subscriptions were raised to the amount of £310,000, of which £44,000 was collected in Ireland. In 1831, violent storms and continual rain brought on another failure of the potato crop in the west of Ireland, particularly along the coast of Galway, Mayo, and Donegal. On this occasion the English public, with ready sympathy, again came forward, and subscriptions were raised, amounting to about £75,000. On several other occasions subsequently, the Government found it necessary to advance money for the relief of Irish distress, invariably occasioned by the failure of the potatoes, and followed by distress and disease. The public and the Legislature had therefore repeated warnings of the danger of having millions of people dependent for existence upon so precarious a crop.

In the year 1845 marked symptoms appeared of the approaching total failure of the national food. The early crop had been saved, but throughout the whole country the late crop was lost. As, however, the grain crop was abundant, the loss was not so severely felt. But the Government were so alarmed that they appointed a commission, consisting of Professors Kane, Lindley, and Playfair, eminent chemists, to inquire into the cause of the failure; but all their skill was unavailing to discover the nature of the mysterious agency by which the destruction was effected. The farmers and peasantry were not deterred from putting in an abundant crop of potatoes next year. In the beginning of the season the crops seemed in excellent condition, and there was every prospect of a plentiful harvest; but suddenly the blight came, as if the crop had been everywhere smitten with lightning, or a withering blast had swept over the whole country. "On the 27th of July," said Father Mathew, "I passed from Cork to Dublin, and this doomed plant bloomed in all the luxuriance of an abundant harvest. Returning on the 3rd of August, I beheld one wide waste of putrifying vegetation. In many places the wretched people were seated on the fences of their decaying gardens, wringing their hands and bewailing bitterly the destruction that had left them foodless." First a brown spot appeared on the leaf; the spots gradually increased in number and size until the foliage withered, the stem became brittle, and snapped

* "Digest of Evidence on Occupation of Land," part I., p. 419.

off immediately when touched. In less than a week the whole process of destruction was accomplished. The fields assumed a blackened appearance; the roots were like pigeons' eggs, which gradually rotted away, and were wholly unfit for food. In one week the chief support of the masses was utterly lost.

For a few weeks the cottiers and small farmers managed to eke out a subsistence by the sale of their pigs and any little effects they had. But pigs, fowls, furniture, and clothing soon went, one after another, to satisfy the cravings of hunger. The better class of farmers lived upon their corn and cattle; but they were obliged to dismiss their servants, and this numerous

parts of the country where its ravages were least felt. The small farmer had only his corn, designed for rent and seed. He was obliged to take it to the mill, to ward off starvation. The children of the poor, placed on short allowance, were suffering fearfully from hunger. Mothers, heart-broken and worn down to skeletons, were seen on certain days proceeding in groups to some distant depôt, where Indian meal was to be had at reduced prices, but still double that of the ordinary market. As they returned to their children with their little bags on their heads, a faint joy lit up their famine-stricken features. Those children, who had lived for two days and two nights on a dole of raw turnips, would now be



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class became the first victims of starvation; for when they were turned off, they were refused admission by their relations, who had not the means of feeding them. Tailors, shoemakers, and other artisans who worked for the lower classes, lost their employment, and became destitute also. While the means of support failed upon every side, and food rose to such enormous prices that everything that could possibly be eaten was economised, so that the starving dogs were drowned from compassion, the famine steadily advanced from the west and south to the east and north, till it involved the whole population in its crushing grasp. It was painfully interesting to mark the progress of the visitation, even in those

relieved by a morsel of nourishing food. The fathers, who had absented themselves from home in order to avoid the agony of listening to their heart-piercing cries, might now sit down and look their little ones in the face. But, if the mother failed to obtain the relief for which she had travelled so far, what then? Yesterday no breakfast, no dinner, no supper; the same to-day; no prospect of better to-morrow. The destitute rushed to the workhouses, which soon became crowded to excess by those who had been able-bodied men and women; while the aged, the sickly, and the children were left to starve. Overpowered by hunger, they lay down helpless, the ready victims of the pestilence that walked close

upon the footsteps of famine, and died in thousands. Let us consider the state of a population such as has been described. Scattered over remote districts, with no gentry resident within many miles, none to whom a complaint could be made but the clergyman, whose energies were overtaxed, how utterly helpless must have been the condition of those doomed people!

A few sketches of the state of the population given by the agents of the Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, who exerted themselves nobly in relieving the distress, may help to give us a more vivid impression of the horrors of the famine. At Boyle they found numbers that had eaten nothing but cabbages or turnips for weeks. The children were in a condition of starvation, ravenous with hunger. At Carrick-on-Shannon a most painful and heart-rending scene presented itself: poor wretches in the last stage of famine, imploring to be received into the house; women that had six or seven children begging that even two or three of them might be taken in, as their husbands were earning but eight-pence a day. Famine was written in their faces. On bread being given to some of these poor creatures, many of them devoured it with ravenous voracity. But the mothers restrained themselves, and carried home portions to their children. The famine produced a peculiar effect on the appearance of the young. Their faces looked wan and haggard, seeming like old men and women, with an extraordinary sharpness of expression; they had lost all their natural sprightliness, making no attempt to play. In the crowded workhouses their bedding consisted of dirty straw, in which they were laid in rows on the floor, even as many as six persons being crowded under one rug—the living and the dying stretched side by side beneath the same miserable covering. The town of Westport was in itself a strange and fearful sight, like what we read of in beleaguered cities; its streets crowded with gaunt wanderers, sauntering to and fro with hopeless air and hunger-struck appearance; a mob of starved, almost naked women around the poor-house, clamouring for soup-tickets.

When the visitors entered a village their first question was, "How many deaths?" "*The hunger is upon us,*" was everywhere the cry; and involuntarily they found themselves regarding this hunger as they would an epidemic, looking upon starvation as a disease. In fact, as they passed along, their wonder was, not that the people died, but that they lived; and Mr. W. G. Foster, in his report, said, "I have no doubt whatever that in any other country the mortality would have been far greater; and that many lives have been prolonged, perhaps saved, by the long apprenticeship to want in which the Irish peasant has been trained, and by that lovely, touching charity which prompts him to share his scanty meal with his starving neighbour. But the springs of this charity must be rapidly dried up. Like a scourge of locusts, the hunger daily sweeps over fresh districts, eating up all before it. One class after another is falling into the same abyss of ruin."*

This is not the place to write the full history of the Irish famine, which might be made as thrilling as the work of Boccaccio or Defoe. The limited space that can be given to the subject permits only a brief review, and a few sketches of the ravages of the calamity, which are necessary to give some impressions of its dreadful reality. One of the most appalling of the narratives sent to the Central Committee of the Society of Friends, was Mr. William Bennet's account of his journey in Ireland. He left Dublin on the 12th of January, and proceeded by coach to Longford, and thence to Ballina, from which he penetrated into remote districts of the County Mayo. In the neighbourhood of Belmullet, he and his companion visited a district, which may serve as a representation of the condition of the labouring class generally in the mountainous and boggy districts, where they burrowed and multiplied, more like a race of inferior animals than human beings. "Many of the cabins," wrote Mr. Bennet, "were holes in the bog, covered with a layer of turf, and not distinguishable as human habitations from the surrounding moors, until close down upon them. The bare sod was about the best material of which any of them were constructed. Doorways, not doors, were provided at both sides of the latter, mostly back and front, to take advantage of the way of the wind. Windows and chimneys, I think, had no existence. A second apartment or partition of any kind was exceedingly rare. Furniture, properly so called I believe, may be stated at nil. I cannot speak with certainty, and wish not to speak with exaggeration, we were too much overcome to note specifically; but as far as memory serves, we saw neither bed, chair, nor table at all. A chest, a few iron or earthen vessels, a stool or two, the dirty rags and night coverings, formed about the sum total of the best furnished. Outside many were all but unapproachable from the mud and filth surrounding them; the same inside is worse, if possible, from the added closeness, darkness, and smoke. We spent the whole morning in visiting those hovels indiscriminately, or swayed by the representations and entreaties of the dense retinue of wretched creatures, continually augmenting, which gathered round and followed us from place to place, avoiding only such as were known to be badly infected with fever, which was sometimes sufficiently perceptible from without by the almost intolerable stench. And now language utterly fails me in attempting to depict the state of the wretched inmates. I would not willingly add another to the harrowing details that have been told; but still they are the facts of actual experience, for the knowledge of which we stand accountable. I have certainly sought out one of the most remote and destitute corners; but still it is within the bounds of our Christian land, under our Christian government, and entailing upon us, both as individuals and as members of a human community, a Christian responsibility from which no one of us can escape. My hand trembles while I write. The scenes of human misery and degradation we witnessed still haunt my imagination with the vividness and power of some horrid and tyrannous delusion, rather than the

* "Transactions during the Famine in Ireland," Appendix III.

features of a sober reality. We entered a cabin. Stretched in one dark corner, scarcely visible from the smoke and rags that covered them, were three children huddled together, lying there because they were too weak to rise, pale and ghastly; their little limbs, on removing a portion of the covering, perfectly emaciated; eyes sunk, voice gone, and evidently in the last stage of actual starvation. Crouched over the turf embers was another form, wild and all but naked, scarcely human in appearance. It stirred not nor noticed us. On some straw, soddened upon the ground, moaning piteously, was a shrivelled old woman, imploring us to give her something, baring her limbs partly to show how the skin hung loose from her bones, as soon as she attracted our attention. Above her, on something like a ledge, was a young woman with sunken cheeks, 'a mother, I have no doubt, who scarcely raised her eyes in answer to our inquiries; but pressed her hand upon her forehead, with a look of unutterable anguish and despair. Many cases were widows, whose husbands had been recently taken off by the fever, and thus their only pittance obtained from the Public Works was entirely cut off. In many the husbands or sons were prostrate under that horrid disease—the result of long-continued famine and low living—in which first the limbs and then the body swell most frightfully, and finally burst. We entered upwards of fifty of these tenements. The scene was invariably the same, differing in little but the manner of the sufferers, or of the groups occupying the several corners within. The whole number was often not to be distinguished, until, the eye having adapted itself to the darkness, they were pointed out, or were heard, or some filthy bundle of rags and straw was seen to move. Perhaps the poor children presented the most piteous and heart-rending spectacle. Many were too weak to stand, their little limbs attenuated, except where the frightful swellings had taken the place of previous emaciation. Every infantile expression had entirely departed; and, in some reason and intelligence had evidently flown. Many were remnants of families, crowded together in one cabin; orphaned little relatives taken in by the equally destitute, and even strangers—for these poor people are kind to each other, even to the end. In one cabin was a sister, just dying, lying beside her little brother, just dead. I have worse than this to relate; but it is useless to multiply details, and they are, in fact, unfit."

It was not only in the wild and dreary west, always the most neglected part of Ireland, without resident gentry, without a middle class, without manufacturers, and almost without towns, that the desolating effects of the famine were felt. In Ulster, even its best counties and most thriving manufacturing districts, where the people were intensely industrious, orderly, and thrifty, some of its worst horrors were endured. In the county of Armagh, where the very small farmers kept themselves in comfort by weaving linen in their own houses, they were obliged to work their looms by night as well as by day, in order to keep hunger from their homes. They worked till by exhaustion and want of sleep, they

were compelled to lie down. Many of them were obliged to sell or pawn all their clothes. In many cases, and as a last resource, those stout-hearted Presbyterians had to sell their Bibles in order to purchase a meal of food for their children. A clergyman of the Church of England in that county wrote to the Committee of the Society of Friends that he had seen the living lying on straw by the side of the unburied dead, who had died three days before. Not only the aged and infirm, not only women and children, but strong men he had known to pine away till they died of actual starvation. Strong, healthy girls became so emaciated, that they could not stand nor move a limb. He visited houses, once comfortable homes, in which not an article of furniture remained. The poor-house of Surgan was shut. Seventy-five persons died there in one day. In the Armagh poor-house forty-five died weekly. The poor-houses became pest-houses, which sent forth the miasma of death into every parish, already full of dysentery and fever. The congregations in the various churches were reduced to almost nothing. Deaths occurred so rapidly that the Roman Catholic priest ceased to attend funerals in his grave-yard. The most deplorable accounts came from Cork, and especially from Skibbereen, a remote district of that county. In December, 1846, Father Mathew wrote to Mr. Trevelyan, then Secretary of the Treasury, that men, women, and children were gradually wasting away. They filled their stomachs with cabbage-leaves, turnip-tops, &c., to appease the cravings of hunger. There were then more than 5,000 half-starved wretches from the country begging in the streets of Cork. When utterly exhausted, they crawled to the workhouse to die. The average of deaths in that union were then over 100 a week. At Crookhaven the daily average of deaths was from ten to twelve; and as early as the first Sunday in September a collection was made to purchase a public bier, on which to take the coffinless dead to the grave, the means to procure coffins being utterly exhausted in that locality. Earlier still in Skibbereen numerous cases had occurred of the dead being kept for several days over ground for want of coffins. In some cases they were buried in the rags in which they died. Throughout the entire west of the county of Cork it was a common occurrence to see from ten to a dozen funerals in the course of the day during the close of 1846.

Mr. J. F. Maguire, who writes as an eye-witness of the scenes he describes, referring to the spring of 1847, says:—"The famine now raged in every part of the afflicted country, and starving multitudes crowded the thoroughfares of the cities and large towns. Death was everywhere—in the cabin, on the highway, in the garret, in the cellar, and even on the flags or side paths of the most public streets of the city. In the workhouses, to which the pressure of absolute starvation alone drove the destitute, the carnage was frightful. It was now increasing at prodigious pace. The number of deaths at the Cork workhouse in the last week of January, 1847, was 104. It increased to 128 in the first week in February, and in the second week of that month it reached 164; 396 in three weeks. During the

month of April as many as thirty-six bodies were interred in one day in that portion of Father Mathew's cemetery reserved for the free burial of the poor; and this mortality was entirely independent of the mortality in the workhouse. During the same month there were 300 coffins sold in a single street in the course of a fortnight, and these were chiefly required for the supply of a single parish. From the 27th of December, in 1846, to the middle of April, in 1847, the number of human beings that died in the Cork workhouse was 2,130! And in the third week of the following month the free interments in the Mathew cemetery had risen to 277—as many as sixty-seven having been buried in one day. The destruction of human life in other workhouses of Ireland kept pace with the appalling mortality in the Cork workhouse. According to official returns, it had reached in April the weekly average of twenty-five per 1,000 inmates; the actual number of deaths being 2,706 for the week ending the 3rd of April, and 2,613 in the following week. Yet the number of inmates in the Irish workhouses was but 104,455 on the 10th of April, the entire of the houses not having then been completed.

“More than 100 workhouse officers fell victims to the famine fever during this fatal year, which also decimated the ranks of the Catholic clergy of the country. Mr. Trevelyan gives names of thirty English and Scotch priests who sacrificed their lives to their zealous attendance on the immigrant Irish, who carried the pestilence with them in their flight to other portions of the United Kingdom. Pestilence likewise slew its victims in the fetid hold of the emigrant ship, and, following them across the ocean, immolated them in thousands in the lazaret houses that fringed the shores of Canada and the United States. The principal business of the time was in meal, and coffins, and passenger ships. A fact may be mentioned which renders further description of the state of the country needless. The Cork Patent Saw Mills had been at full work from December, 1846, to May, 1847, with twenty pairs of saws, constantly going from morning till night, cutting planks for coffins, and planks and scantlings for fever sheds, and for the framework of berths for emigrant ships.” *

The honourable gentleman gives a few vivid sketches of individuals and groups that he saw in the grasp of the destroyer. For example:—A tall man, of once powerful frame, stood leaning against the door-post of a small house in one of the lanes of the city of Cork. Every trace of expression save that of blank apathy had been banished from his face. His skin was the dark colour of the famine. Behind him, in the front room, lay stark and stiff, stretched on the bare floor, the dead bodies of two of his children—one a girl of thirteen, the other a boy of seven; and in the closet, on a heap of infected straw, raving and writhing in fever, lay the dying mother of the dead children, and wife of the dying father who was leaning against the door-post. Sixteen human beings sought an asylum in that dwelling, and in less than a week eleven were taken out dead. Similar

scenes were enacted in many a dwelling of that city; whole families perishing, and the dead remaining around the helpless living, till the number of victims was completed. At the Church of St. Anne, Shandon, under a kind of shed attached to a guard-house, lay huddled up in their filthy fetid rags about forty human creatures—men, women, children, and infants of the tenderest age—starving and fever-stricken, most of them in a dying state, some dead, and all gaunt, yellow, hideous from the combined effects of famine and disease. Under this open shed they had remained during the night, and until that hour—about ten in the morning—when the funeral procession was passing by, and their indescribable misery was beheld by the leading citizens of Cork, including the mayor, and several members of the Board of Guardians. The odour which proceeded from that huddled-up heap of human beings was of itself enough to generate a plague.

Skibbereen was described “As one mass of famine, disease, and death; the poor rapidly sinking under fever, dysentery, and starvation.” There, as early as the first week in February, 1847, there was constant use for a coffin with movable sides, in which the dead were borne to the grave, and there dropped into their last resting-place. On the whole, the resignation of this stricken people was something wonderful. Outrage was rare, and the violation of the rights of property were not at all so numerous as might have been expected, from persons rendered desperate by hunger; and where such things occurred, the depredators were not those who suffered the severest distress. But as the famine proceeded in its desolating course, and people became familiar with its horrors, the demoralising effects of which we have read in such visitations were exhibited in Ireland also. Next to the French, the Irish have been remarkable for their attention to the dead, as well as for the strength of their domestic affections. They had a decent pride in having a respectable “wake” and funeral, when they lost any member of the family; and however great their privations were, they made an effort to spare something for the last sad tokens of respect for those they loved. But now there was no mourning for the dead, and but little attention paid to the dying. The ancient and deep-rooted custom with regard to funerals was “swept away like chaff before the wind.” The funerals were rarely attended by more than three or four relatives or friends. Sometimes the work of burial was left entirely to persons hired to do it, and in many cases it was not done at all for five or six days after death, and then it was only by threats and rewards that any persons could be got to perform the dangerous duty. “I saw,” said Mr. R. D. Webb, of Dublin, one of the agents of the Society of Friends, “many graves made within a few yards of the cabin door. In some places bodies have been interred under the floors on which they died; and in others they have been covered by the ruins of the cabins they occupied; this mode of burial being resorted to as the least hazardous, troublesome, and expensive.” The demoralisation appeared further in the abuses connected with the distribution of relief.

* “Father Mathew: a Biography.” By John Francis Maguire, M.P. P. 385.

The reports of the Commissioners have stated that, in those districts where the relief committees worked together with zeal and in good faith, the administration was excellent, checking fraud and imposture, while it relieved the really distressed. But in some districts this was unhappily not the case. Abuses existed, varying from apathy and neglect to connivance at frauds and misappropriation of the funds. "Gross impositions were daily practised by the poor. The dead or absent were personated; children were lent for a few days in order to give the appearance of large families, and thus entitle the borrowers to a greater number of rations. Almost the whole population, in many cases, alleged poverty and looked for relief; and then, conceiving the receipt of cooked food a degradation, they endeavoured to compel the issue of raw meal. One universal spirit of mendicancy pervaded the people, to which in several places the committees offered no opposition. Yielding to intimidation, or seeking for popularity, they were willing to place the whole population indiscriminately on the lists to be supported by public charity. In some cases they even sought for a share of it themselves. It is stated in the reports of the Commissioners that gentlemen of station and property were not ashamed to sanction the distribution of rations to their servants and labourers, or to their own tenants. The same persons, while willing to give to those who did not need it, frequently disregarded the sufferings of the starving poor. This painful subject may be concluded in the words of a gentleman, who had full opportunity of knowing the abuses practised in one of the worst parts of the country:—"Had I not been an eye-witness, I could scarcely have conceived it possible that the awful visitation with which this country is afflicted should have produced such an utter disregard of integrity in the administration of its relief."*

Among the instances of intimidation, a gentleman of landed property related a case, which more than anything, perhaps, showed the demoralisation produced among the Roman Catholic peasantry. He thus wrote to the Relief Commissioners:—"I know of the most shocking instance of this, where shameless, worthless farmers came in bodies, and compelled the priest by threats to give them the meal intended for the poor. In this very parish a scene occurred truly scandalous. The British Association gave our parish priest three tons of meal. On its arrival the riotous conduct of the population was such, I had to go out, and the priest begged of me to take in the meal and store it for him. I did so. On the third day after, he took it to the parish chapel, where a scene occurred which baffles description; and in the end this donation was totally misapplied, as the destitute got nothing, and those well off everything. I can prove that persons retailing meal, whose houses at the moment contained many hundred pounds weight, received large quantities of it. The priest, poor man, came to me afterwards, and said that for the universe he would not distribute another pound of meal. It

appears that when he attempted to do what was right a regular scene of intimidation ensued; he was threatened even with personal violence, and the instant demolition of the chapel itself; and he was absolutely obliged to give away the food to those who did not require it. Now, this is only one instance; but one under my own eye, where an honest man was made the victim to this species of intimidation."

The Marquis of Lansdowne, in a speech delivered in the House of Lords on the 25th of January, 1847, gave an estimate, as accurate as the best calculation could make it, of the loss in money value that had been occasioned by the failure of the crops in Ireland. "Taking a valuation of £10 per acre for potatoes, and £3 10s. for oats, the deficiency on the potato crop alone amounted to £11,350,000, while on the crop of oats it amounted to £4,660,000, or to a total value of £16,000,000 for the whole of a country which, if it could not be said to be the poorest, was certainly not one of the richest in the world. In weight the loss was 9,000,000 or 10,000,000 tons of potatoes. The whole loss had been equivalent to the absolute destruction of 1,500,000 arable acres." On the same day, Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, gave a statement of what the Government had done during the recess for the relief of the Irish population, in pursuance of acts passed in the previous session. He stated that an immense staff of servants had been employed by the Board of Public Works—upwards of 11,000 persons—giving employment to half a million of labourers, representing 2,000,000 of souls; the expense for the month of January being estimated at from £700,000 to £800,000.

It was proposed to form, in certain districts, relief committees, which should be empowered to receive subscriptions, levy rates, and take charge of donations from the Government; and that out of the fund thus raised they should establish soup kitchens, and deliver rations to the famishing inhabitants. Sir John Burgoyne, Inspector-General of Fortifications, was appointed to superintend the works. Lord John Russell referred to measures for draining and reclaiming waste land in Ireland, and to advances of money for this purpose to the proprietors, to be repaid in instalments spread over a number of years. On a subsequent day, in answer to questions from Mr. Roebuck, the noble lord gave a statement of the sums that had already been advanced. £2,000,000 had been issued on account of the Poor Employment Act of the last session. He expected that not less than £500,000 or £600,000 a month would be spent from the present time until August, and he calculated the whole expenditure would not be less than £7,000,000. There was great difference of opinion on the subject of the Government schemes, the operation of which will be noticed hereafter. A counter-scheme for the establishment of reproductive works deserves to be noticed, for the interest it excited and the attention it occupied for years afterwards—namely, the railway plan of Lord George Bentinck. Acts of Parliament, he said, had been passed for 1,582 miles of railway in Ireland,

* "The Condition and Prospects of Ireland," &c., by Jonathan Pim, p. 97.

of which only 123 miles had then been completed, while 2,600 miles had been completed in England. In order to encourage the formation of Irish railways, therefore, he proposed that for every £100 expended by the companies £200 should be lent by the Government at the same interest at which they borrowed the money, Mr. Hudson, who was "chairman of 1,700 miles of railroad," pledging his credit that the Government would not lose a shilling by the transaction. By adopting this plan they could give reproductive employment to 109,000 men in different parts of the country, for earth-works, fences, drains, and water-courses connected with the lines. This would give support to 550,000 souls on useful work, tend to develop the resources of the country, and produce such improvement that the railways

Labouchere, and other members of the Government. It was also opposed by Sir Robert Peel, who exposed the unsoundness of the economic principles involved in it. The bill was rejected by a majority of 204, the numbers being 118 for the second reading, and 322 against it.

Notwithstanding this decision, loans were subsequently advanced to certain Irish railways, amounting to £620,000, so that the objection of the Government was more to the extent than to the principle of Lord George Bentinck's measure.

CHAPTER LXII.

The Famine—Government Measures of Relief—Inadequacy of the Poor Law System—Vast Extent of the Unions—The Public Works—Abuses and Demoralisation—Enormous Expenditure of Public Money—Th



ONE OF THE "SCALPS," THE RESIDENCE OF THE CLARE AND CONNEMARA PEASANTRY DURING THE YEAR OF FAMINE.

constructed would add £23,000,000 to the value of landed property in twenty-five years, and would pay £22,500 a-year to the poor-rates. The purchase of land for the railways would moreover place £1,250,000 in the hands of Irish proprietors, for the employment of fresh labour, and £240,000 in the hands of the occupying tenants for their own purposes. The Government also would reap from the expenditure of £24,000,000 on railways in Ireland, an enormous increase of revenue in the increased consumption of articles of excise and customs. The noble lord's speech, which lasted two hours and a half, was received with cheers from both sides of the House.

Leave was given to bring in the bill, though it was strongly objected to by Lord John Russell, Mr.

Temporary Relief Act—Gratuitous Rations to Three Millions of People—Mr. Trevelyan, Secretary of the Treasury, on the Irish Crisis—Exertions and Influence of Father Mathew; his Appeal to the English Government—Effect of the Temperance Movement in preserving the Public Peace during the Famine—Intemperance encouraged at the Relief Works—Organisation of Relief Committees—Gradual Decrease of the Famine—Measures adopted for the Mitigation of the Famine Fever—Consumption of Indian Corn during the Distress—The "British Association"—Munificence of the United States—Exertions of Private Individuals—Tabular View of Contributions during the Famine.

As in the whole history of the world, perhaps, so great a calamity as the Irish famine never called for sympathy and relief, so never was a more generous response elicited by any appeal to humanity. The Government and the Legislature did all that was possible with the means at their disposal, and the machinery that already existed, or could be hastily constructed, to meet the

THE IRISH FAMINE: SCENE AT THE GATE OF A WORKHOUSE.



overwhelming emergency. The newly-established poor law system, though useful as far as it went, was quite inadequate to meet such great distress. It had been passed while the country was comparatively prosperous, and contained no provision for such a social disorganisation as this famine. By the Acts of 1 & 2 Vic., c. 56, no out-door relief whatever could be given under any circumstances. "This unyielding enactment was manifestly unsuitable amid such extended destitution. The workhouses were soon filled with the old and the sick, with widows and orphans, and with the helpless of every kind, who were of course the first to feel the pressure, and to seek for shelter. Even for these, so greatly increased was their number, the workhouse accommodation was wholly inadequate; yet, when the houses were once filled, there remained no legal provision for the destitute. In-door relief was given to the class who might have been safely relieved out of doors; while the able-bodied, who of all others required the most stringent test of destitution, received out-door relief indiscriminately, to an enormous extent, on the public works.*

The size of the unions was also a great impediment to the working of the Poor Law. They were three times the extent of the corresponding divisions in England. In Munster and Connaught, where there was the greatest amount of destitution, and the least amount of local agency available for its relief, the unions were much larger than in the more favoured provinces of Ulster and Leinster. The union of Ballina comprised a region of upwards of half a million acres, and within its desert tracts the famine assumed its most appalling form, the workhouse being more than forty miles distant from some of the sufferers. As a measure of precaution, the Government had secretly imported and stored a large quantity of Indian corn, as a cheap substitute for the potato, which would have served the purpose much better had the people been instructed in the best modes of cooking it. It was placed in commissariat depôts, along the western coast of the island, where the people were not likely to be supplied on reasonable terms, through the ordinary channels of trade. The public works consisted principally of roads, on which the people were employed as a sort of supplement to the poor-law. Half the cost was a free grant from the Treasury, and the other half was charged upon the barony in which the works were undertaken. The expense incurred under the "Labour Rate Act, 9 and 10 Vic., c. 107," amounted to £4,766,789. It was almost universally admitted, when the pressure was over, that the system of public works adopted was a great mistake; and it seems wonderful that such grievous blunders could have been made with so many able statesmen and political economists at the head of affairs and in the service of the Government. The public works undertaken consisted in the breaking up of good roads to level hills and fill hollows, and the opening of new roads in places where they were not

required—work which the people felt to be useless, and which they performed only under strong compulsion, being obliged to walk to them in all weathers for miles, in order to earn the price of a breakfast of Indian meal. Had the labour thus comparatively wasted been devoted to the draining, sub-soiling, and fencing of the farms, connected with a comprehensive system of arterial drainage, immense and lasting benefit to the country would have been the result, especially as works so well calculated to ameliorate the soil and guard against the moisture of the climate, might have been connected with a system of instruction in agricultural matters of which the peasantry stood so much in need, and to the removal of the gross ignorance which had so largely contributed to bring about the famine. As it was, enormous sums were wasted. Much needless hardship was inflicted on the starving people in compelling them to work in frost and rain when they were scarcely able to walk, and, after all the vast outlay, very few traces of it remained in permanent improvements on the face of the country. The system of Government relief works "failed chiefly through the same difficulty which impedes every mode of relief, whether public or private—namely, the want of machinery to work it. It was impossible suddenly to procure an efficient staff of officers for an undertaking of such enormous magnitude—the employment of a whole people. The overseers were necessarily selected in haste; many of them were corrupt, and encouraged the misconduct of the labourers. In many cases the relief committees, unable to prevent maladministration, yielded to the torrent of corruption, and individual members only sought to benefit their own dependants. The people everywhere flocked to the public works; labourers, cottiers, artisans, fishermen, farmers, men, women, and children—all, whether destitute or not, sought for a share of the public money. In such a crowd, it was almost impossible to discriminate properly. They congregated in masses on the roads, idling under the name of work, the really destitute often unheeded and unrelieved because they had no friend to recommend them. All the ordinary employments were neglected; there was no fishing, no gathering of seaweed, no collecting of manure. The men who had employment feared to lose it by absenting themselves for any other object; those unemployed spent their time in seeking to obtain it. The whole industry of the country seemed to be engaged in road-making. It became absolutely necessary to put an end to it, or the cultivation of the land would be neglected. Works undertaken on the spur of the moment, not because they were needful, but merely to employ the people, were in many cases ill-chosen, and the execution equally defective. The labourers, desirous to protect their employment, were only anxious to give as little labour as possible, in which their overlookers or gaugers in many cases heartily agreed. The favouritism, the intimidation, the wholesale jobbing practised in many cases were shockingly demoralising. The problem was to support 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 of destitute persons, and this was

* "Transactions during the Famine in Ireland," p. 14.

in a great measure effected, though at an enormous cost to the empire.*

The following statement of the numbers receiving rations, and the total expenditure under the Act in each of the four provinces, compared with the amount of population, and the annual value assessed for poor-rate, may serve to illustrate the comparative means and destitution of each province:—

	Population.	Valuation.	Greatest number of rations given out.	Total Expenditure.
Ulster ...	2,386,373	£3,320,133	346,517	£170,598
Leinster ...	1,973,731	4,624,543	450,606	308,068
Munster ...	2,396,161	3,777,103	1,013,826	671,554
Connaught ...	1,418,859	1,465,643	745,652	526,048
	8,175,124	£13,187,421	2,556,601	£1,676,268

In order to induce the people to attend to their ordinary spring work, and put in the crops, it was found necessary to adopt the plan of distributing free rations. On the 20th of March, therefore, a reduction of twenty per cent. of the numbers employed on the works took place, and the process of reduction went on until the new system of gratuitous relief was brought into full operation. The authority under which this was administered was called the "Temporary Relief Act," which came into full operation in the month of July, when the destitution was at its height, and three millions of people received their daily rations. Sir John Burgoyne truly described this as "the grandest attempt ever made to grapple with famine over a whole country." Never in the history of the world were so many persons fed in such a manner by the public bounty. It was a most anxious time—a time of tremendous labour and responsibility to those who had the direction of this vast machinery. A member of the Board of Works thus describes the feeling which no doubt pervaded most of those that were officially connected with the administration of relief—"I hope never to see such a winter and spring again. I can truly say, in looking back upon it even now, that it appears to me not a succession of weeks and days, but one long continuous day, with occasional intervals of night-mare sleep. Rest one could never have, when one felt that in every minute lost a score of men might die." Mr. Trevelyan was then Secretary of the Treasury, and it was well that a man so enlightened, energetic, and benevolent, occupied the post at such a time. He was indefatigable in his efforts to mitigate the calamity, and he wrote an able account of "the Irish Crisis" in the "Edinburgh Review." Having presented the dark side of the picture in faithfully recording the abuses that had prevailed, it is right to give Mr. Trevelyan's testimony as to the conduct of the relief committees during this supreme hour of the nation's agony. "It is a fact very honourable to Ireland that among upwards of 2,000 local bodies to whom advances were made under this act, there is not one to which, so far as the Government is informed, any suspicion of embezzlement attaches."†

The clergy, Protestant and Roman Catholic, almost the only resident gentry in several of the destitute districts, worked together on the committees with commendable zeal, diligence, and unanimity. Among the Roman Catholic clergy, Father Mathew was at that time by far the most influential and popular. The masses of the peasantry regarded him as almost an inspired apostle. During the famine months, he exerted himself with wonderful energy and prudence, first, in his correspondence with different members of the Government, earnestly recommending and urging the speedy adoption of measures of relief; and next in commending those measures to the people, dissuading the hungry from acts of violence, and preaching submission and resignation under that heavy dispensation of Providence. Of this there are ample proofs in the letters now published in his biography. "It is not to harrow your feelings, dear Mr. Trevelyan," he wrote, "I tell this tale of woe. No; but to excite your sympathy in behalf of our miserable peasantry. It is rumoured that the capitalists in the corn and flour trade are endeavouring to induce the Government not to protect the people from famine, but to leave them at their mercy. I consider this a cruel and unjustifiable interference. I am so unhappy at the prospect before us, and so horror-struck by the apprehension of our destitute people falling into the ruthless hands of the corn and flour traders, that I risk becoming troublesome, rather than not lay my humble opinions before you." Again—"I hail with delight the humane, the admirable measures for relief announced by my Lord John Russell; they have given universal satisfaction. But of what avail will all this be, unless the wise precautions of Government will enable the toiling workman, after exhausting his vigour during a long day, to earn a shilling, to purchase with that shilling a sufficiency of daily food for his generally large and helpless family?" Father Mathew earnestly pleaded for out-door relief, in preference to the workhouse, foreseeing the danger of sundering the domestic bonds, which operate so powerfully as moral restraints in Ireland. The beautiful picture which he drew of the Irish peasant's home in his native land was not too highly coloured, as applied to the great majority of the people:—"The bonds of blood and affinity, dissoluble by death alone, associate in the cabins of the Irish peasantry—not only the husband, wife, and children, but the aged parents and the married couple and their destitute relatives, even to the third and fourth degree of kindred. God forbid that political economists should dissolve these ties! should violate these beautiful charities of nature and the Gospel! I have often found my heart throb with delight when I beheld three or four generations seated around the humble board and blazing hearth; and I offered a silent prayer to the great Father of all that the gloomy gates of the workhouse should never separate those whom such tender social chains so fondly link together."*

If the temperance organisation established by Father

* "The Condition and Prospects of Ireland, and the Evils arising from the Present Distribution of Land Property," by Jonathan Pin.

† "Edinburgh Review," January, 1848.

* "Father Mathew," p. 375.

Mathew had been perverted to political purposes by the Repeal agitation, there is no doubt that it contributed in a very large degree to the preservation of life and property during the two awfully trying years of famine. "It is a fact," said Father Mathew—"and you are not to attribute my alluding to it to vanity—that the late provision riots have occurred in the districts where the temperance movement has not been encouraged. Our people are as harmless in their meetings as flocks of sheep, unless when inflamed and maddened by intoxicating drink. Were it not for the temperate habits of the greater portion of the people of Ireland, our unhappy country would be before now one wide scene of tumult and bloodshed." His indignation was excited by one source of demoralisation connected with the relief works. Writing to Mr. Trevelyan towards the close of 1860, he said—"I am not called upon to give an opinion as to the utility of the public works now in progress; necessity gave them birth, and they must be executed. But it afflicted me deeply to find the benevolent intentions of Government frustrated, and the money so abundantly distributed made a source of demoralisation and intemperance. Wherever these benevolent works are commenced public-houses are immediately opened, the magistrates, with a culpable facility, granting licences. The overseers and pay-clerks generally hold their offices in these pestiferous erections; even some of these officers have pecuniary interest in those establishments. It often happens that the entire body of labourers, after receiving payment, instead of buying provisions for their famishing families, consume the greater part in the purchase of intoxicating drink. The same deplorable abuse takes place on the different railway lines."*

The number of persons relieved in the several work-houses had continued to increase during the year 1846; the total being 114,205, which was an increase of more than 9,000 in three months. On the 1st of January, 1846, there were 42,000 persons relieved in 123 work-houses, and the entire cost of relief during the year amounted to £316,000. The system of affording relief through the agency of public works having broken down, as we have already seen, it was determined to expand the poor-law system so as to meet the present emergency in giving out-door relief. The Act 10 & 11 Vic., c. 7, therefore, directed the formation of relief committees, each consisting of the magistrates, a clergyman of each persuasion, the Poor Law guardian, and the three highest ratepayers in each electoral division, with a finance committee of four gentlemen to control the expenditure of each union. Inspecting officers were also appointed; a central commission, sitting in Dublin, was to superintend the working of the whole system. This commission consisted of Sir John Burgoyne, chairman; Mr. Twissleton, Poor Law commissioner; Mr. Reddington, under-secretary; Colonel Jones, chairman of the Board of Works, and Colonel M'Gregor, who was at the head of the constabulary. The test of desti-

tution applied consisted in requiring the personal attendance of all who need relief, excepting only the sick and impotent, and children under the age of nine, and that the relief should be given in cooked food, in portions sufficient to maintain health and strength. It was usual to give it in this manner, because even the most destitute often disposed of the meal for tea, tobacco, or spirits. But meal cooked into stir-about could not be thus bartered. Depots of corn and meal were formed, mills and ovens were erected; huge boilers, cast specially for the purpose, were sent over from England, for preparing the stir-about, and large supplies of clothing were collected, for the people were almost naked as well as starving. In July, 1847, the system reached its highest point. 3,020,712 persons then received separate rations; of whom, 2,265,534 were adults, and 755,178 were children. This vast multitude was, however, rapidly lessened at the approach of harvest, which happily was not affected by the disease. Food became comparatively abundant, and labour in demand. By the middle of August, relief was discontinued in nearly one half of the unions, and ceased altogether on September 12. It was limited by the act to the 1st October. This was the second year in which upwards of 3,000,000 of people had been fed out of the hands of the magistrates in Ireland; but it was now done more effectually than at first. Organised armies, it was said, had been rationed before; but neither ancient nor modern history can furnish a parallel to the fact that upwards of three millions of persons were fed every day in the neighbourhood of their own homes, by administrative arrangements emanating from, and controlled by, one central office. The expense of this great undertaking amounted to £1,559,212—a moderate sum in comparison with the extent of the service performed, and in which performance the machinery of the poor-law unions was found to afford most important aid. Indeed, without such aid, the service could hardly have been performed at all; and the anticipations of the advantages to be derived from the poor-law organisation in such emergencies were fully verified.*

The relief committees were also authorised to adopt measures to avert or mitigate the famine fever, which had prevailed to an awful extent. They were to provide temporary hospitals, to ventilate and cleanse cabins, to remove nuisances, and procure the proper burial of the dead, the funds necessary for these objects being advanced by the Government in the same way as for furnishing food. Upwards of 300 hospitals and dispensaries were provided under the act, with accommodation for at least 23,000 patients, and the sanitary powers which it conferred were extensively acted upon. The expense incurred for these objects amounted to £119,000, the whole of which was made a free gift to the unions in aid of the rates. The entire amount advanced by the Government in 1846 and 1847 towards the relief of the Irish people under the fearful calamity to which they were exposed was £7,132,286, of which one half was

* "Father Mathew," p. 377.

* "History of the Irish Poor Law," by Sir George Nichol's, p. 318.

to be repaid within ten years, and the rest was a free grant.*

The consumption of Indian corn during the famine caused a great deal of wild speculation in the corn trade. Splendid fortunes were rapidly made, and as rapidly lost. The price of Indian corn in the middle of February, 1847, was £19 per ton; at the end of March it was £13; and by the end of August it had fallen to £7 10s. The quantity of corn imported into Ireland the first six months was 2,849,508 tons.

The action of private benevolence was on a scale proportioned to the vast exertions of the Government. It is quite impossible to estimate the amount of money contributed by the public for the relief of Irish distress. We know what sums were received by associations and committees; but great numbers sent their money directly, in answer to appeals from clergymen and others, to meet demands for relief in their own respective localities. In this way we may easily suppose that abuses were committed, and that much of the money received was misappropriated, although a greater portion of it was honestly dispensed. Among the organisations established for raising contributions, the greatest was the "British Association," which had for its chairman and vice-chairman two of our merchant princes; Mr. Jones Lloyd, afterwards Lord Overstone, and Mr. Thomas Baring. The amount of subscriptions collected by this association, "for the relief of extreme distress in Ireland and Scotland," was £269,302. The Queen's letters were issued for collections in the churches throughout England and Wales, and these produced £200,738, which was also entrusted to the British Association. These sums made together no less than £470,041, which was dispensed in relief by one central committee. One-sixth of the amount was apportioned to the Highlands of Scotland, where there was extensive destitution, and the rest to Ireland. In fact, the amount applied to these objects by the Association exceeded half a million sterling, for upwards of £130,000 had been obtained for the sale of provisions and seed corn in Ireland, and interest accruing on the money contributed.† In administering the funds placed at their disposal, the committee acted concurrently with the Government and the Poor Law authorities. It wisely determined at the outset that all grants should be in food, and not in money; and that no grant should be placed at the disposal of any individual for private distribution. The committee concluded their report to the subscribers by declaring that although evils of greater or less degree must attend every system of gratuitous relief, they were confident that any evils that might have accompanied the application of the funds would have been far more than counterbalanced by the benefits that had been conferred upon their starving fellow-countrymen, and that if ill-desert had sometimes participated in their bounty, a vast amount of human misery and suffering had been relieved.

But the chief source whence the means at their dis-

posal were derived was the magnificent bounty of the citizens of the United States of America. The supplies sent from America to Ireland were on a scale unparalleled in history. Meetings were held in Philadelphia, Washington, New York, and other cities in quick succession, presided over by the first men in the country. All through the States the citizens evinced an intense interest, and a noble generosity worthy of the great Republic. The railway companies carried free of charge all packages marked "Ireland." Public carriers undertook the gratuitous delivery of packages intended for the relief of Irish distress. Storage to any extent was offered on the same terms. Ships of war, without their guns, came to the Irish shores on a mission of peace and mercy, freighted with food for British subjects. Cargo after cargo followed in rapid succession, until nearly 100 separate shipments had arrived, our Government having consented to pay the freight of all donations of food forwarded from America, which amounted in the whole to £33,000. The quantity of American food consigned to the care of the Society of Friends was nearly ten thousand tons, the value of which was about £100,000. In addition to all this, the Americans remitted to the Friends' Committee £16,000 in money. They also sent 642 packages of clothing, the precise value of which could not be ascertained.* There was a very large amount of remittances sent to Ireland during the famine, by the Irish in the United States. Unfortunately, there are no records of those remittances prior to 1848; but since that time we are enabled to ascertain a large portion of them, though not the whole, and their amount is something astonishing. The following statement of sums remitted by emigrants in America to their families in Ireland, was printed by order of Parliament:—During the years 1848, £460,180; 1849, £540,619; 1850, £957,087; 1851, £990,811.

The arrival of the American ships naturally excited great interest at the various ports. "On Monday, the 13th of April," writes Mr. Maguire, "a noble sight might be witnessed in Cork Harbour—the sun shining its welcome on the entrance of the unarmed war ship Jamieson, sailing in under a cloud of snowy canvas, her great hold laden with bread-stuffs for the starving people of Ireland. It was a sight that brought tears to many an eye, and prayers of gratitude to many a heart. It was one of those things which one nation remembers of another long after the day of sorrow has passed. Upon the warm and generous people to whom America literally broke bread and sent life, this act of fraternal charity, so gracefully and impressively offered, naturally produced a profound and lasting impression, the influence of which is felt at this moment."† The captain, who had volunteered his services, was introduced to Father Mathew, by a letter from Mr. John Tappan, of Boston, who said:—"It affords me great pleasure to make this philanthropic countryman of ours known to one who is personally known to me, and to millions in both hemispheres, as one of the greatest benefactors of

* Trevelyan's "Irish Crisis," reprinted from the "Edinburgh Review."

† Report of the British Association, 1st Jan., 1849.

* "Transactions during the Famine in Ireland," p. 44.

† "Father Mathew," p. 400.

his race. In Mr. Forbes you will find one of Nature's nobles, who, leaving the endearments of home at this boisterous season, crosses the ocean, to imitate his and our Saviour—to feed the hungry, and raise the desponding.”

The exertions of private individuals in relieving the distressed were beyond all praise. Many persons, both lay and clerical, devoted their whole time for months to this work of mercy. One clergyman, in the county of Mayo, kept a soup-kitchen at work, which supplied 2,500 persons daily. One of the inspectors of the Society of Friends saw, in Erris, the owner of a small estate feeding his whole tenantry, many of whom were once in comfortable circumstances. He had seen his soup-kitchen in operation, and admired the zeal and activity of his very large family in labouring for the relief of the poor. “What I wonder at,” said the writer, “since I have seen with my own eyes, is that he should have done so much, and that his family are so cheerfully devoted to the same work of mercy, without the slightest pecuniary recompense. With the exception of that family and two others—one a coast-guard officer—there were no persons whatever to look after the poor within a circuit of upwards of thirty miles, in a district filled with a swarming and wretched population. From strict inquiry and close observation, I am satisfied that the lives of hundreds have been saved by the efforts of these three men and their families. It is a great deal easier to put one's hand into a long purse, than to labour ‘from morn till dewy eve,’ filling out stir-about to crowds of half-clad hungry wretches, sinking with weakness and fever. I saw thousands to-day of the most miserable people I have ever seen.” Another proprietor, whose wife and young daughter conducted two soup-kitchens, though he had lost his rents, kept eighty persons at work daily during the famine, and did not allow one of his tenants to be put on the relief lists. These are only specimens of hundreds of families, including those of many clergymen of the Established Church, who thus nobly exerted themselves during that terrible crisis. In one very destitute district in the county of Mayo, the indefatigable exertions of a lady had organised a Ladies' Association, to which she acted as secretary. It consisted of eight members, residing several miles apart. All had large boilers except one. They distributed cooked food daily, and had a

weekly gratuitous distribution of rice and meal, besides sales at reduced rates. They employed 135 spinners and weavers. Their monthly expenditure exceeded £700, and supported upwards of 15,000 families, and also several hundred occasional applicants; and all this labour was undertaken in addition to their household duties, as mistresses of families. Many persons in a lower station of life also distinguished themselves in this work of benevolence. The chief boatman of a water-guard station, in Mayo, with a very small salary, and four motherless children, very well brought up, kept a soup-kitchen, at which he worked daily, from four o'clock in the morning, without fee or reward.”*

The following is a tabular view of the whole amount of voluntary contributions during the Irish famine, which deserves a permanent record for the credit of our common humanity :—

Local contributions officially reported in 1846	£104,689	18	1
Do. do. do. in 1847	199,569	4	5
British Relief Association, total received £470,041 1s. 2d., say five-sixths for Ireland	391,700	17	8
General Central Relief Committee, College Green	83,934	17	11
Less received from British Relief Association	20,190	0	0
	63,744	17	11
Irish Relief Association, Sackville Street	42,446	5	0
Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, London	42,905	12	0
Central Relief Committee of do., Dublin 198,313 15 3 Less received from Committee of Friends in London, and interest	39,249	19	11
	159,063	15	4
Indian Relief Fund	13,919	14	2
National Club, London	19,928	12	2
Wesleyan Methodist Relief Fund, London	20,056	14	4
Irish Evangelical Society, London	9,261	9	9
Baptists' Relief Fund, London	6,141	11	2
Ladies' Irish Clothing Society, London	9,533	4	0
Less received from British Association, &c. 5,324 12 11			
	4,208	11	1
Ladies' Relief Association for Ireland 19,584 0 9 Less received from Irish Relief Association and for sales of manufactures	7,659	6	7
	11,924	14	2
Ladies' Industrial Society for encouragement of labour among the peasantry	1,968	12	8
Less received from Irish Relief Association 1,500 0 0			
	468	18	2
Belfast Ladies' Association for the relief of Irish Distress... ..	2,617	1	6
Belfast Ladies' Industrial Association for Connaught	4,615	16	1
There were also two collections in Belfast for general purposes, the amount of which exceeded	10,000	0	0

* “Conditions and Prospects of Ireland,” p. 62.

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